

An
Impartial Report
— of the —
DEBATES
in the
Two Houses of Parliament.
in the Year 1797.

including Copies of all
STATE PAPERS, TREATIES, CONVENTIONS &c

By WILLIAM WOODFALL.

Vol. 1.

Being the fourth Session of Debates Written & Published
by the REPORTER.

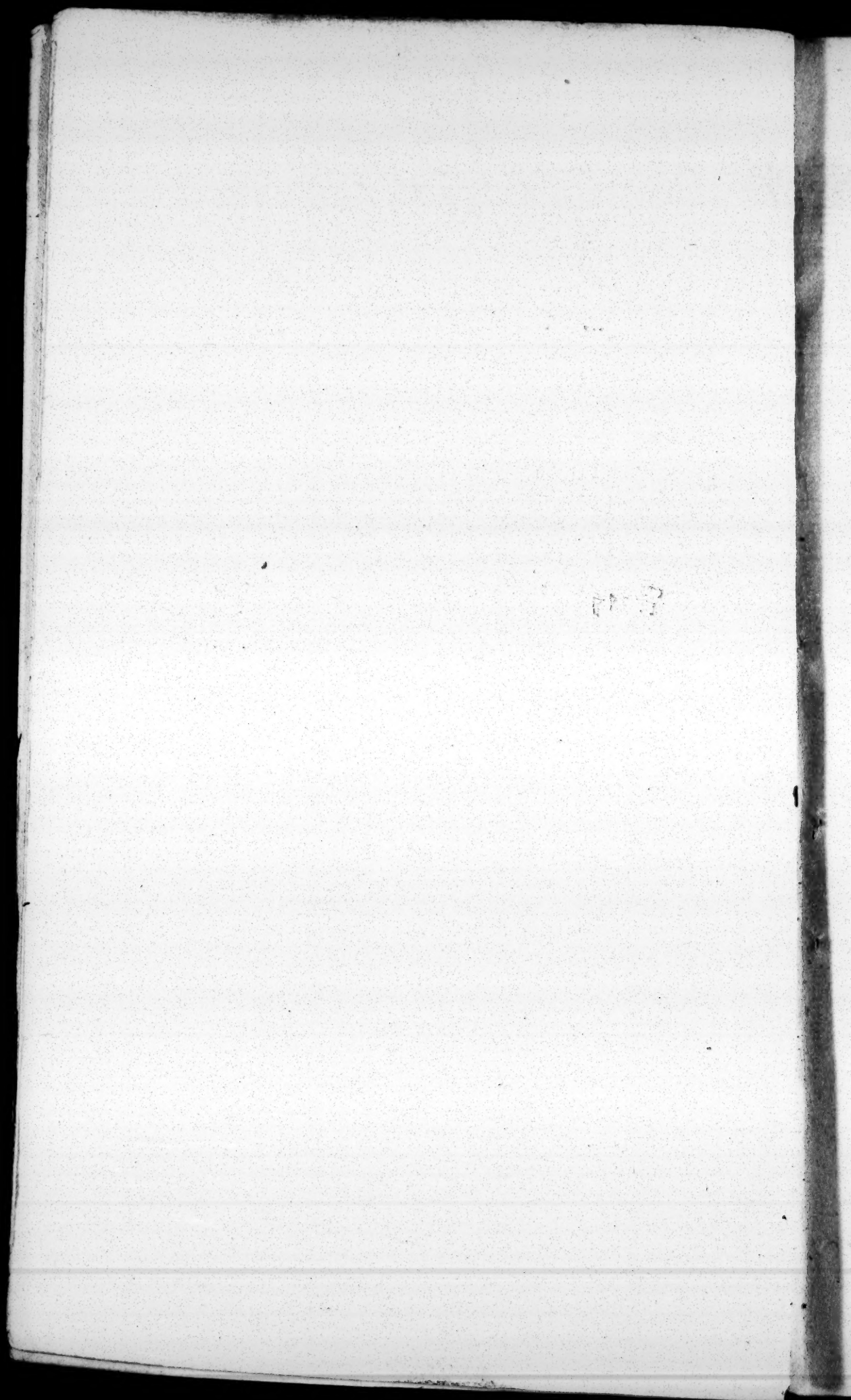


WILLIAM WOODFALL

London.

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— 1797 —



AN
IMPARTIAL REPORT
OF THE
DEBATES

THAT OCCUR IN THE
TWO HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT,

In the Course of the First of the Eighteenth Parliament
of Great Britain, called to meet at Westminster,
on Tuesday the 27th of September, 1796.

WITH
SOME ACCOUNT OF THE RESPECTIVE SPEAKERS,
AND
NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

INCLUDING COPIES OF ALL
STATE PAPERS, TREATIES, CONVENTIONS, &c.

By WILLIAM WOODFALL,
AND ASSISTANTS.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY T. CHAPMAN, No. 151, FLEET-STREET.

1796.

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TO THE PUBLICK.

SO eventfull has been the period since the reporter had last occasion to address his readers, and such have been the changes in the aspect of public affairs, that it is scarcely possible to predict what will be the issue of the war, with any reasonable expectation of being likely to have the prediction fulfilled. The heavy burthens, which have necessarily been imposed on the country in order to discharge the unavoidable expences the war has occasioned, have hitherto been born with chearfullness, from a consciousness that ministers maintained hostilities in support, not only of the national honour, but for the preservation of that palladium of liberty, the British Constitution, which involves in it the religion, the morals, the property and all that is estimable in the country.

Within the last six months a desire for peace and
a wish to restore Europe to its repose by rescuing it
a 2 from

from the horrors of a war, unparalleled in history in all its circumstances, have been manifested by the British government, but whether the French directory were swayed by their fears of internal commotion, whether they saw that the existence of their power depended on the employment of their armies in an enemy's country, or whether they stood upon matters of mere form and punctilio, every effort on the part of administration to put an end to hostilities proved ineffectual, till the steps taken for that purpose "have at length opened the way to an immediate and direct negotiation, the issue of which must either produce the desirable end of a just, honourable, and solid peace for us and our allies, or must prove beyond dispute, to what cause alone the prolongation of the calamities of war must be ascribed." This circumstance has been rendered the more interesting and important by his Majesty's gracious declaration to his Parliament in his Speech from the Throne, that he shall immediately send a person to Paris with full powers to treat for a general peace. Possibly the late glorious successes of the Austrian arms, the total defeat of the army of Jourdan, and the discomfiture of that under Moreau, may have lowered the tone of the French Republican cabinet, and incline them to enter into a negotiation, on the happy conclusion of which so much

much depends. In the mean time it cannot but afford a consoling reflection to every Englishman, when he turns his eyes back on the publick events of the last year, to find that if the hosts of armies of France have dazzled Europe with their victories, they have filled every province through which they passed with horror by their depredation, their ferocity and their total disregard of every principle of civilization, morality and religion, while the navy of Great Britain has in all quarters of the world rode mistress of the seas, atchieved prodigies of valour, and while our extensive and increasing commerce has been protected, almost beyond example, the most important advantages have been obtained by its glorious exertions; nor has it been less distinguished for its successes, than the mildness, humanity and attention, experienced by all whom the chance of war put into the hands of British seamen.

If we look to the internal situation of the kingdom, although every man must lament that taxes so extremely irksome are obliged to be levied on the subject, and heartily wish that a period was put to the necessity that goads the minister of finance to invent new means of resource, it cannot but be gratifying to all who love their country, to see that under the
severe

severe pressure of the publick burthens, agriculture and manufactures have flourished, and our commerce has encreased to a degree unexampled in British annals.

The first session of the new Parliament has opened at an awfull period, when the resources of the kingdom are labouring under peculiar difficulties. The great scarcity of money which has convulsed the credit of the first merchants in London, has naturally and necessarily produced a general shock, which has not been unfelt by the minister. His talents as a financier, great as they confessedly are, have been taxed to discover how he might raise more money with least inconvenience to the publick: Whatever the means are, that he may have devised, they must early be communicated to parliament, and if they should prove improvident or inexpedient, we may be assured that the vigilance of an opposition, poor in numbers, but rich in abilities, and acute in detection of error, will assail the vulnerable part of the system, raise a cry against it, and if that cry be found on examination to be just, procure a salutary alteration. Such in this country is the utility and the value of an opposition, and where the members of that opposition, are, as we hope, the present may be, honestly inclined and friendly to their country; where
they

they are not actuated solely by motives of private ambition, and influenced to attain power at any rate and by any means, however injurious to the interests of Great Britain, we shall hail opposition as the guardians of government, the useful watchmen of public affairs, and the *salutares reipublicæ custodes*.

Much reliance, in the early part of the war, had been placed on the want of specie in France, and the rapid depreciation of their paper currency. Experience, however, has proved that a great country can find substitutes for money, which shall for the moment supply the place of current coin. America, during her contest with the mother country first taught this lesson. Her paper and her pewter dollars were held in ridicule in Great Britain, but we had the mortification to see, that with such apparently feeble aids she attained her independency. Our senators have reasoned about the discount upon *assignats*, till the argument itself has in the eyes of many become as worthless as an *assignat*, notwithstanding that it is an undeniable fact, that the interior of France is reduced to a state of bankruptcy, the distresses of which cannot be effectually alleviated but by means which peace can alone afford, however they may for a short period be palliated by those

extraordinary efforts, that phrensy may suggest, and which madmen only would attempt to carry into effect. During the present campaign the French have discovered a resource, to which they have resorted, since the king of Prussia withdrew himself from the confederated alliance. They have carried war into their enemies country, and supported their armies by the pillage and plunder of the inhabitants. The defeats of Jourdan and Moreau threaten a speedy termination to that project, as far as regards the German empire. Heaven avert, that such a band of avowed robbers should attempt to invade this island! If prompted by despair, they should risque the measure, conscious of the patriotism, the valour and the spirit of our countrymen, who would doubtless feel what it is to fight *pro aris et focis*, we trust that the whole nation would unite as one man, and that the enemy would be repelled with shame and disgrace.

October 10, 1796.

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The following are the Names of the Persons returned as MEMBERS of the NEW PARLIAMENT, 1796, with the former Representatives, and the Number on the Poll, where there was a contest

The Sixteen SCOTCH PEERS returned to represent the Peerage of Scotland, are,

The Marquis of Tweeddale	The Earl of Aboyne
Earl of Errol	Earl of Bredalbane
Earl of Caillies	Earl of Stair
Earl of Strathmore	Earl of Glasgow
Earl of Dumfries	Lord Cathcart
Earl of Elgin	Lord Somerville
Earl of Dalhousie	Lord Torphichen
Earl of Northesk	Lord Napier

The Names in *Italicks* are those of the Candidates who have not succeeded

Election in 1790.

Election in 1796.

ABINGDON, *Berks.*

E. Loveden Loveden, esq. Thomas Theop. Metcalfe

AGMONDESHAM, *Bucks.*

W. Drake, esq. C. Drake Gerrard
T. Drake Tyrwitt, esq. Re-elected

ST. ALBANS, *Herts.*

Lord Bingham	Hon. R. Bingham	378
John Calvert, jun. esq.	T. S. Dyot Lucknall	308
	J. F. Waddington	208

ALDBOROUGH, *Suffolk.*

Lord Grey	M. A. Taylor
Hon. Thomas Grenville	Sir John Aubrey

ALDROROUGH, *Yorkshire.*

John Galley Knight, esq.	C. Duncombe
Richard M. T. Chiswell, esq.	Re-elected

ANDOVER, *Hants.*

William Fellows, esq.	Hon. C. Wallop
Benjamin Lithieullier, esq.	Re-elected

ANGLESEA.

Elected in 1790.

Elected in 1796.

ANGLESEA.

Hon. Arthur Paget

Re-elected

APPLEBY, *Westmorland.*

Hon. William Grimston

Hon. John Tufton

Hon. Hon. John Rawdon

John Courtenay

ARUNDEL, *Suffex.*

Sir George Thomas, bart.

Re-elected

Sir Thomas Gascoigne, bart.

James Greene

ASHBURTON, *Devon.*

Sir Robert Mackreth, knt.

Re-elected

Lawrence Palk, esq.

Re-elected

AYLESBURY, *Bucks.*

Scrope Bernard, esq.

Re-elected

Gerard Lake, esq.

Re-elected

BANBURY, *Oxfordshire.*

W. Holbech, esq.

Dudley North

BARNTSTAPLE, *Devon.*

John Cleveland, esq.

Re-elected 196

Richard Wilfon 168

William Devaynes, esq.

Unsuccessful 158

BATH, *Somersetshire.*

Viscount Weymouth

Re-elected

Rt. Hon. Sir Pepper Arden, knt.

Re-elected

BEAUMARIS, *Anglesea,*

Sir Watkin W. Wynne, bart.

Lord Newborough

BEDFORDSHIRE.

John Osborn, esq.

Re-elected

Hon. St. A. St. John

Re-elected

BEDFORD TOWN.

William Colhoun, esq.

Re-elected

S. Whitbread, jun. esq.

Re-elected

BEDWIN, *Wilts.*

Viscount Stopford

Hon. T. Bruce

Edward Hyde East, esq.

John Woodhouse

BEERALSTON, *Devon.*

Sir John Mitford, knt.

Re-elected

Sir George Beaumont, bart.

W. Mitford

BERKSHIRE.

George Vanfittart, esq.

Re-elected 1332

Charles Dundas, esq.

Re-elected 1332

E. L. Loveden 245

BERWICK,

Elected in 1790.

Elected in 1796.

BERWICK, Northumberland.

Hon. Charles Carpenter
John Callander, esq.

Lord Tyrconnel
Re-elected

BEVERLEY, Yorkshire.

John Wharton, esq.
Sir J. Pennyman, bart.

W. Tatton
N. C. Burton

BEWLEY, Worcestershire.

Hon. G. F. Littleton

M. P. Andrews

BISHOP'S CATTLE, Shropshire.

Henry Strachy, esq.
William Clive, esq.

Re-elected
Re-elected

BLECHINGLEY, Surrey.

Sir Robert Clayton, bart.
Philip Francis, esq.

Sir Lionel Copley
J. Steer

BODMYN, Cornwall.

Sir John Morshead, bart.
Roger Willbraham, esq.

Re-elected
J. Nesbitt

BOROUGHBRIDGE, Yorkshire.

Sir Richard Sutton, bart.
Maurice Robinson, esq.

F. Burdett
Sir J. Scott

BOSSINEY, Cornwall.

Hon. J. J. A Stuart, Wortley
Evelyn Pierrepont, esq.

Re-elected
J. Lubbock

BOSTON, Lincolnshire.

Sir Peter Burrell, knt.
Thomas Fidell, esq.

Lord Milfintown		251
Re-elected		290
S. Barnard		95

BRACKLEY, Northamptonshire.

John William Egerton, esq.
Samuel Haynes, esq.

Re-elected
Re-elected

BRAMBER, Sussex.

Sir H. Gough Calthorpe, bart.
Sir Thomas Coxhead, knt.

Sir C. W. Boughton
J. Adams

BRECON COUNTY.

Sir Charles Morgan, bart.

Re-elected

BRECON TOWN.

Charles Morgan, esq.

Re-elected

BRIDGENORTH, Shropshire.

Isaac Hawk. Browne, esq.
John Whitmore, esq.

Re-elected
Re-elected

Election in 1790.

Election in 1796.

BRIDGEWATER, *Somersetshire.*

Hon. Vere Poulett
John Langston, esq.

G. Pocock
J. Allen

BRIDPORT, *Dorset.*

Charles Sturt, esq.
George Barclay, esq.

Re-elected		119
Re-elected		136
T. Burges		110

BRISTOL CITY.

Marquis of Worcester
Lord Sheffield

C. Bragge		364
Re-elected		340
— Hobbouse		102

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

Right Hon. James Grenville
Marquis of Titchfield

Re-elected
Re-elected

BUCKINGHAM TOWN.

George Nugent, esq.
Lord Bridport, K. B.

Re-elected
Hon. T. Grenville

CALLINGTON, *Cornwall.*

Sir John Call, bart.
Paul Orchard, esq.

Re-elected
Re-elected

CALNE, *Wilts.*

Joseph Jekyll, esq.
Benjamin Vaughan, esq.

Re-elected
Sir F. Baring

CAMBRIDGESHIRE.

Charles Yorke, esq.
James Warwood Adeane, esq.

Re-elected
Re-elected

CAMBRIDGE TOWN.

Honourable Edward Finch
Robert Manners, esq.

Re-elected
Re-elected

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY.

Right Honourable William Pitt
Earl of Euston

Re-elected
Re-elected

CAMELFORD, *Cornwall.*

William Smith, esq.
Lord William Cavendish Bentinck

J. Dennison jun.
J. F. Angerstein, jun.

Lord Preston and Mr. R. Adair offered themselves as candidates, but the Mayor refused to admit them as such.

CANTERBURY CITY.

George Gipps, esq.
Sir John Honywood,

John Baker		772
S. E. Sawbridge		744
Sir John Honywood		704
George Gipps		724

CAR-

Election in 1790.

Election in 1796.

CARDIFF.

Honourable James Evelyn Stuart Re-elected

CARDIGANSHIRE.

Earl of Lisburne Thomas Johnes

CARDIGAN.

John Campbell, esq. Honourable J. Vaughan

CARLISLE.

J. C. Curwen, esq.	Re-elected	430
Wilson Braddyll, esq.	Sir F. Vane	421
	Sir James Graham	288
	E. Knubley	277

CARMARTHENSHIRE.

Sir James Hamlyn, bart. Re-elected

CARMARTHEN.

John George Phillips, esq. Dorien Mayens

CARNARVONSHIRE.

Sir Robert Williams, bart. Re-elected

CARNARVON.

Lord Paget Honourable E. Paget

CASTLE RISING, *Norfolk.*

Charles Boone, esq.	H. Churchill
Charles Chester, esq.	Re-elected

CHESHIRE.

John Crewe, esq.	Re-elected
Sir R. S. Cotton, bart.	T. Cholmondeley

CHESTER CITY.

Vifcount Belgrave	Re-elected
Thomas Grosvenor, esq.	Re-elected

CHICHESTER, *Suffex.*

George White Thomas, esq.	Re-elected
Thomas Steele, esq.	Re-elected

CHIPPENHAM, *Wilt.*

George Fludyer, esq.	Re-elected
James Dawkins, esq.	Re-elected

CHRISTCHURCH, *Hants.*

Hans Sloane, esq.	W. S. Rose
George Rose, esq.	Re-elected

CIRENCESTER, *Gloucestershire.*

Robert Preston, esq.	Re-elected	184
Michael Hicks Beach, esq.	Re-elected	250
	—Howell	150

CLITH.

Election in 1790.

Election in 1796.

CLITHERO, *Lancashire.*

Sir John Aubrey, bart.	Lord Edward C. Bentinck
Richard Earle Drax Grosvenor, esq.	Honourable Robert Curzon

COCKERMOUTH, *Cumberland.*

J. B. Garforth, esq.	Re-elected
John Anstruther, esq.	E. Burrows

COLCHESTER, *Essex.*

Robert Thornton, esq.	Re-elected		645
Sir George Jackson, bart.	Lord Muncafter		486
	R. Shipley		265

CORF-CASTLE, *Dorsetshire.*

John Bond, esq.	Re-elected
Henry Banks, esq.	Re-elected

CORNWALL.

Sir W. Lemon, bart.	Re-elected
Francis Gregor, esq.	Re-elected

COVENTRY, *Warwickshire.*

Lord Eardley,	W. Bird
John Wilmot, esq.	N. Jefferys

CRICKLADE, *Wilts.*

Thomas Hiscourt, esq.	Re-elected
Lord Porchester	Re-elected

CUMBERLAND.

Sir Henry Fletcher, bart.	Re-elected
Humphrey Senhouse, esq.	John Lowther

DARTMOUTH, *Devonshire.*

Edmund Bastard, esq.	Re-elected
Right Hon. J. C. Villiers	Re-elected

DENBIGHSHIRE.

Robert Watkin Wynne, esq.	Re-elected
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DENBIGH TOWN.

Richard Myddleton, jun. esq.	Re-elected
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DERBYSHIRE.

Edward Miller Munday, esq.	Re-elected
Lord John Cavendish	Re-elected

DERBY TOWN.

Lord G. A. H. Cavendish	Re-elected		239
Edward Coke, esq.	Re-elected		238
	P. Crampton		6

DEVIZES, *Wilts.*

Rt. Hon. Henry Addington	Re-elected
Joshua Smith, esq.	Re-elected

DEVON-

Election in 1790.

Election in 1796.

DEVONSHIRE.

John Rolle, esq.	Laurence Palk
John P. Balfard, esq.	Re-elected

DORSETSHIRE.

Francis John Browne, esq.	Re-elected
William Merton Pitt, esq.	Re-elected

DORCHESTER, *Dorset.*

Francis Fane, esq.	Re-elected
Hon. Cropley Ashley,	Re-elected

DOVER, *Kent.*

Charles Small Pybus, esq.	Re-elected		593
John Trevannion, esq.	Re-elected		557
	Col. Bayley		230

DOWNTON, *Wilts.*

William Wrightson, esq.	Sir W. Scott
H. S. Conway	Hon. B. Bouverie

DROITWICH, *Worcestershire.*

Hon. Andrew Foley	Re-elected
Sir E. Winnington, bart.	Re-elected

DUNWICH, *Suffolk.*

Sir Joshua Vanneck, bart.	Re-elected
Miles Barne, esq.	Snowden Barne

DURHAM COUNTY.

Rowland Burdon, esq.	Re-elected
Ralph Milbanke, esq.	Re-elected

DURHAM CITY.

William Hen. Lambton, esq.	Re-elected
Sir H. Vane Tempest, bart.	Re-elected

EASTLOOE, *Cornwall.*

Robert Wood, esq.	Re-elected
Charles Arbuthnot, esq.	Re-elected

ST. EDMONDSBURY, *Suffolk.*

Sir Charles Davers, bart.	Re-elected		23
	Lord F. Harvey		17
Lord Charles Fitzroy	Lord C. Fitzroy		14

ESSEX COUNTY.

Tho. Berney Bramston, esq.	Re-elected
John Bullock, esq.	Re-elected

EVESHAM, *Worcestershire.*

Sir J. Rushout, bart.	Unsuccessful		248
	C. Helluson		315
Thomas Thompson, esq.	Re-elected		267

EXETER, *Devon.*

James Buller, esq.	Sir C. W. Bamfylde
John Baring, esq.	Re-elected

Election in 1790.

Election in 1796.

BYE, Suffolk.

Hon. William Cornwallis
Viscount Brome

Re-elected
M. Singleton

FLINTSHIRE.

Sir Roger Mostyn, bart.

Re-elected

FLINT TOWN.

Watkin Williams, esq.

Re-elected

FOWEY, Cornwall.

Phillip Raffleigh, esq.
Rt. Hon. Sylvester Douglas

Re-elected
R. P. Carew

GATTON, Surrey.

William Currie, esq.
John Nesbitt, esq.

John Petrie
Sir Gilbert Heathcote

ST. GERMAIN'S, Cornwall.

Marquis of Lorne
Hon. William Eliot

Lord Grey
Re-elected

GLAMORGANSHIRE.

Thomas Wyndham, esq.

Re-elected

GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

Hon. G. C. Berkeley
Thomas Masters, esq.

Re-elected
Marquis of Worcester

GLOUCESTER.

John Pitt, esq.
Henry Howard esq.

Re-elected
Re-elected

GRAMPOUND.

Jeremiah Crutchley, esq.
Thomas Wallace, esq.

Robert Sewell
B. Edwards

GRANTHAM, Lincolnshire.

George Sutton, esq.
Simon Yorke, esq.

Re-elected
Re-elected

GREAT GRIMSBY, Lincolnshire.

John Harrison, esq.
Dudley North, esq.

A. Boucherett 132
W. Mellish 132
Capel Loft 130
Home Gordon 128

EAST GRINSTEAD, Suffex.

Nathaniel Dance, esq.
William Nisbet, esq.

Re-elected
J. Strange

GUILDFORD, Surrey.

Hon. Thomas Onslow
George Sumner, esq.

Re-elected 90
C. Norton 131
P. Botham 85

HAMPSHIRE.

Sir W. Heathcote, bart.
William Chute, esq.

Re-elected
Re-elected

HAR-

Election in 1790.

Election in 1786.

HARWICH, Essex.

Rt. Hon. Tho. Ord Powlett
John Robinson, esq.

R. Hopkins
Re-elected

HASLEMERE, Surrey.

Rt. Hon. W. G. Hamilton
James C. Satterthwaite, esq.

James Lowther
Re-elected

HASTINGS, Surrey.

John Stanley, esq.
Robert Dundas, esq.

Sir James Sanderfon
Nicholas Vanittart

HAVERFORDWEST, Pembrokeshire.

Lord Kenfington

Re-elected

HELSTON, Cornwall.

Sir Steph. Lushington, bart.
Charles Abbot, esq.

— Richards
Re-elected

HEREFORDSHIRE.

Rt. Hon. Thomas Harley
Sir G. Cornwall, bart.

Re-elected 1562
Unsuccessful 1012
Robert Biddulph 1296

HEREFORD CITY.

John Scudamore, esq.
James Walwyn, esq.

Re-elected
Re-elected

HERTFORDSHIRE.

William Plumer, esq.
William Baker, esq.

Re-elected 1016
Re-elected 887
J. F. Waddington 406

HERTFORD TOWN.

John Calvert, esq.
Nathaniel Dimisdale, esq.

Re-elected
Re-elected

HAYDON, Yorkshire.

Sir Lionel Darell, bart.
Beilby Thompson, esq.

Re-elected
Christopher Atkinson

HEYTESBURY, Wilts.

Charles Rose Ellis, esq.
Viscount Clifden

Sir J. Leicester
Re-elected

HIGHAM FERRERS, Northamptonshire.

James Adair, esq.

Re-elected

HINDON, Wilts.

Thomas Wildman, esq.
James Wildman, esq.

M. G. Lewes
Re-elected

HONITON, Devon.

Sir George Yonge, bart.
George Templer, esq.

George Shum
George Chambers

Her.

Election in 1790.

Election in 1796.

HORSHAM, *Suffex.*

Lord W. Gordon
William Fullarton, esq.

Sir J. Macpherson
James Fox

HUNTINGDONSHIRE.

Earl Ludlow
Viscount Hinchinbrooke

Lord Fred. Montagu
Re-elected

HUNTINGDON.

Hon. John Willett Payne
Henry Speed, esq.

W. H. Fellows
John Calvert, jun.

HYTHE, *Kent.*

Sir C. F. Radcliffe, bart.
W. Evelyn, esq.

Re-elected
Re-elected

IVELWATER, *Somersetshire.*

John Harcourt, esq.
Samuel Long, esq.

Sir Robert Clayton
W. Dickinson

IPSWICH, *Suffolk.*

Sir John Doyley, bart.
C. A. Crickett, esq.

Sir A. Hammond		408
Re-elected		382
— Middleton		371

ST. IVES, *Cornwall.*

William Praed, esq.
William Mills, esq.

Re-elected
Sir R. C. Glynn

KENT.

Sir E. Knatchbull, bart.
Filmer Honeywood, esq.

Re-elected		5202
Unsuccessful		4280
Sir William Geary		4418

KING'S LYNN, *Norfolk.*

Hon. Horatio Walpole
Sir Martin B. Folke, bart.

Re-elected
Re-elected

KINGSTON-UPON-HULL, *Yorkshire.*

Earl of Burford
Samuel Thornton, esq.

Sir C. Turner		383
Re-elected		772
W. S. Stanhope		764

KNARESBOROUGH, *Yorkshire.*

James Hare, esq.
Lord John Townshend

Re-elected
Re-elected

LANCASHIRE.

T. Stanley, esq.
John Blackburne, esq.

Re-elected
Re-elected

LANCASTER.

Sir G. Warren, bart.
John Dent, esq.

Richard Penn
Re-elected

Division in 1790.

Election in 1790.

LAUNCESTON, Cornwall.

Hon. J. Rodney	Hon. J. Rawdon	28
William Garthshore, esq.	J. Brogden	13
	Unsuccessful	11
	Earl of Dalsin	11

LEICESTERSHIRE.

William Pochin, esq.	Re-elected
Hon. Penn Asheton Curzon	Re-elected

LEICESTER TOWN.

Lord Raneliffe	Re-elected	993
Samuel Smith, esq.	S. Smith	1029
	B. Greathead	556
	W. Ruding	537

LEOMINSTER, Herefordshire.

John Hunter, esq.	Re-elected	462
Richard Beckford, esq.	G. A. Pollen	291
	R. Biddulph	290

LESKEARD, Cornwall

Hon. Edward James Eliot	Re-elected
Hon. John Eliot	Re-elected

LESTWITHIEL, Cornwall.

Reginald Pole Carew, esq.	Hans Sloane
George Smith, esq.	W. Drummond

LEWES, Sussex.

Hon. Henry Pelham	J. C. Pelham
Thomas Kempe, esq.	Re-elected

LYME REGIS, Dorset.

Hon. Henry Fane	Re-elected
Hon. Thomas Fane	Re-elected

LINCOLNSHIRE.

Sir J. Thorold, bart.	Sir Gilbert Heathcote
Robert Vyner, jun. esq.	Re-elected

LINCOLN CITY.

Lord Hobart	Richard Ellison
Hon. Col. Rawdon	Re-elected

LITCHFIELD, Staffordshire.

Thomas Anson, esq.	Re-elected
Lord Grandv. Levison Gower	Re-elected

LIVERPOOL, Lancashire.

Banister Tarlton, esq.	Re-elected	496
Bamber Gascoyne, esq.	Re-elected	659
	J. Tarlton	317

Election in 1790.

Election in 1796.

LONDON.

William Curtis, esq.	Re-elected	4318
Sir Watkin Lewes	Unsuccessful	2360
John William Anderson, esq.	Re-elected	3173
William Lushington, esq.	Re-elected	4379
	H. C. Combe	3857
	W. Pickett	2795

LUDLOW, *Shropshire.*

Rich. Pavne Knight, esq.	Re-elected
Hon. Robert Clive	Re-elected

LUGGERSHALL, *Wiltshire.*

Hon. W. A. Harbord	Earl of Dalkeith
Mr. Alderman Newnham	Thomas Everett

LYMINGTON, HANTS.

Sir Harry Burrard, bart.	Sir H. B. Neale
Nath. Brassy Halhed, esq.	W. Manning

MAIDSTONE, *Kent.*

Matthew Bloxham, esq.	Re-elected
Clement Taylor, esq.	Oliver Delancy

MALDEN, *Essex.*

Joseph Holden Strutt, esq.	Re-elected
Charles Callis Western, esq.	Re-elected

MALMESBURY, *Wiltshire.*

Sir James Sanderfon, bart.	P. Thelluson
Francis Glanville, esq.	J. Smith

MALTON, *Yorkshire.*

Viscount Milton	Re-elected
William Baldwin, esq.	Re-elected

MARLBOROUGH, *Wiltshire.*

Hon. Thomas Bruce	Lord Bruce
Earl of Dalkeith	Honourable J. Bruce

MARLOW, *Bucks.*

Thomas Williams, esq.	Re-elected	158
Will. Lee Antonie, esq.	O. Williams	154
	J. Fiott	75

ST. MAWES, *Cornwall.*

Sir William Young, bart.	Re-elected
W. Drummond, esq.	Re-elected

ST. MICHAEL'S, *Cornwall.*

Sir Chist. Hawkins, bart.	Re-elected
David Howell, esq.	Sir Stephen Lushington

MERIONETHSHIRE.

Sir Rob. Wil. Vaughan, bart.	Admiral Thompson
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Elected in 1790.

Elected in 1796.

MIDNURST, *Suffex.*

Hon. P. C. Wyndham
Peter Isaac Thellusson, esq.

S. Douglas
C. Long

MIDDLESEX.

W. Mainwaring, esq.
George Byng, esq.

Re-elected
Re-elected

MELBORNE PORT, *Somersetshire.*

Lord Muncaster
Mark Wood, esq.

Lord Paget	53
Sir R. Ainsley	55
General Macleod	46
— Concannon	37

MINEHEAD, *Somersetshire.*

John Fownes Luttrell, esq.
Thomas Fownes Luttrell, esq.

Re-elected	97
Unsuccessful	85
J. Langton	94
Admiral Pole	82

MONMOUTHSHIRE.

James Rooke esq.
Sir Robert Salisbury, bart.

Re-elected
C. Morgan

MONMOUTH TOWN.

Charles Bragge, esq.

C. Thompson

MONTGOMERYSHIRE.

Francis Lloyd, esq.

Re-elected

MONTGOMERY TOWN.

Whitshed Keene, esq.

Re elected

MORPETH, *Northumberland.*

Sir James St. Clair Erskine
Viscount Morpeth

Re-elected
W. Huskinson

NEWARK, *Nottingham.*

William Crosbie, esq.
John Man. Sutton, esq.

M. Wood
Re-elected

NEWCASTLE UNDER LINE, *Staffordshire.*

W. Egerton, esq.
Sir F. Ford, bart.

Re-elected
W. Booth

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE, *Northumberland.*

Sir M. W. Ridley, bart.
Charles Brandling, esq.

Re elected
Re elected

NEWPORT, *Cornwall.*

Viscount Fielding
Charles Rainsford, esq.

J. Richardson
— Northey

NEWPORT, *Hants.*

Viscount Palmerston
Hon. Pennyton Lamb

J. C. Jervoise
Edward Rushworth

NORFOLK.

Election in 1790.

Election in 1796.

NEWTON, Lancashire.

Thomas Peter Leigh, esq.	Re-elected
Thomas Brooke, esq.	Re-elected

NEWTON, Hants.

Sir John Barrington, bart.	Sir R. Worsley
George Canning, esq.	C. S. Le Fevre

NORFOLK.

Sir John Wodehouse, bart.	Re-elected
Tho. W. Coke, esq.	Re-elected

NORTHALLERTON, Yorkshire.

Henry Peirse, esq.	Re-elected
Edw. Lascelles, esq.	Re-elected

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

Thomas Powis, esq.	Re-elected
Francis Dickens, esq.	Re-elected

NORTHAMPTON TOWN.

Lord Compton	Honourable Spencer Percival . . .	720
Hon. Edward Bouverie	Re-elected	512
	— Walcot	470

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Charles Grey, esq.	Re-elected
Thomas Rich. Beaumont, esq.	Re-elected

NORWICH CITY.

Hon. Henry Hobart	Re-elected	1622
Ed. Hon. W. Windham	Re-elected	1859
	B. Gurney	1076

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.

Lord E. C. C. Bentinck	Lord William Bentinck
Charles M. Pierrepont, esq.	Evelyn Pierrepont

NOTTINGHAM TOWN.

Robert Smith, esq.	Re-elected	1271
D. Parker Coke, esq.	Re-elected	1076
	Peter Crompton	568

OAKHAMPTON, Devonshire.

John St. Leger, esq.	R. Tyrwhitt
Robert Ladbroke, esq.	R. B. Robson

ORFORD, Suffolk.

Lord W. Seymour	Re-elected
Lord Robert Seymour	Hon. Mr. Stuart

OXFORDSHIRE.

Marquis of Blandford	Lord C. Spencer
Vic. Wenman	J. Fane

Elected in 1790.

Elected in 1790.

OXFORD CITY.

Francis Burton, esq.	Re-elected
Arthur Annesley, esq.	H. Peters

OXFORD UNIVERSITY.

Sir William Dolben, bart.	Re-elected
Francis Page, esq.	Re-elected

PEMBROKESHIRE.

Lord Milford	Re-elected
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PEMBROKE TOWN.

Hugh Barlow, esq.	Re-elected
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PENRYN, Cornwall.

Sir F. Bassett, bart.	T. Wallis
Richard Glover, esq.	W. Meek

PETERBOROUGH CITY.

Hon. Lionel Damer	Hon. M. Damer
Rich. Benyon, esq.	Re-elected

PETERSFIELD, Hants.

Wm. Jolliffe, esq.	Re-elected
Rt. Hon. C. Fulke Greville	H. Jolliffe

PLYMPTON, Devonshire.

Philip Metcalf, esq.	W. Adams
Wm. Manning, esq.	W. Mitchell

PLYMOUTH, Devonshire.

Sir Alan Gardner, bart.	— Elford
Sir F. L. Rogers, bart.	Re-elected

PORTFRACT, Yorkshire.

John Smith, esq.	Re-elected
W. Sotheron, esq.	Lord Galway

POOL, Dorsetshire.

Benj. Lester, esq.	Hon. C. Stuart
Michael Angelo Taylor, esq.	J. Jeffery

PORTSMOUTH, Hants.

Sir H. Featherstonhaugh	Lord H. Seymour
Hon. Thomas Erskine	Re-elected

PRESTON, Lancashire.

William Cunliffe Shaw, esq.	Lord Stanley	.	.	.	.	.	.	772
Sir Henry Philip Hoghton, bart.	Re-elected	.	.	.	.	.	.	775
	John Horrocks	.	.	.	.	.	.	738

QUEENBOROUGH, Kent.

Richard Hopkins, esq.	G. Crauford
John Sergeant, esq.	E. Nepean

Election in 1790.

Election in 1796.

RADNORSHIRE.

Thomas Johnes, esq.

Walter Wilkins

NEW RADNOR.

Viscount Malden

Re-elected

READING, Berkshire.

Francis Annesley, esq.

Re-elected

R. Aldw. Neville, esq.

Re-elected

EAST RETFORD, Nottinghamshire.

Sir John Ingilby, bart.

W. Petrie 82

Wm. Henry Clinton, esq.

Sir W. Amcotts 66

J. Blackburn 65

RICHMOND, Yorkshire.

Earl of Inchiquin

C. G. Beauclerk

Hon. Laurence Dundas

Re-elected

RIPFON, Yorkshire.

William Lawrence, esq.

Re-elected

Sir G. Allanfon Winn, bart.

Re-elected

ROCHESTER, Kent.

George Best, esq.

Hon. H. Tufton

Sir Richard King, bart.

Re-elected

NEW ROMNEY, Kent.

Sir Elijah Impey

J. Fordyce

Richard Joseph Sullivan, esq.

J. W. Willett

RUTLANDSHIRE.

Gerald Noel Edwards, esq.

Re-elected

Lord Sherard

Sir William Lowther

RYE, Sussex.

Charles Long, esq.

Robert Dundas

Hon. R. B. Jenkinson

Re-elected

RYEGATE, Surry.

Hon. J. Somers Cocks

Re-elected

Joseph Sidney Yorke, esq.

Re-elected

SALOP, OR SHROPSHIRE.

Sir Richard Hill, bart.

Re-elected

John Kynaston, esq.

Re-elected

SALTASH, Cornwall.

Edward Bearcroft, esq.

Re-elected

Hon. William Stuart

Lord Macdonald

SANDWICH, Kent.

Sir Philip Stephens, bart.

Re-elected

Sir Hor. Mann, bart.

Re-elected

Election in 1790.

Election in 1796.

NEW SARUM, *Wiltshire.*

Hon. W. H. Bouverie
William Hufley, esq.

Re-elected
Re-elected

OLD SARUM, *Wiltshire.*

George Hardinge, esq.
John Sullivan, esq.

Re-elected
Re-elected

SCARBOROUGH, *Yorkshire.*

Earl of Tyrconnel
Hon. Edmund Phipps

Lord Charles Somerset
Re-elected

SEAFORD, *Suffex.*

John Tarleton, esq.
Richard Paul Jodrell, esq.

Charles Ellis	50
George Ellis	59
— Durand	46
— Leach	42

SHAFTESBURY, *Dorsetshire.*

Charles Duncombe, jun. esq.
Paul Benfield, esq.

Walter Boyd	190
Re-elected	224
James Milnes	143
William Dawson	105

SHOREHAM, *Suffex.*

John Aldridge, esq.
Hon. C. William Wyndham

Sir C. Bishop
Re-elected

SHREWSBURY, *Shropshire.*

Sir William Pulteney, bart.
John Hill, esq.

Re-elected	370
Unsuccessful	153
Hon. W. Hill	249

SOMERSETSHIRE.

W. Gore Langton, esq.

Re-elected
W. Dickinson

SOUTHAMPTON TOWN.

James Amyatt, esq.
George Henry Rose, esq.

Re-elected
Re-elected

SOUTHWARK BOROUGH.

Paul Le Mesurier, esq.
Henry Thornton, esq.

G. W. Thelluson	1267
Re-elected	1466
G. Tierney	994

STAFFORDSHIRE.

Sir Ed. Lyttleton, bart.
Earl Gower Sutherland

Re-elected
Re-elected

STAFFORD TOWN.

Hon. Edward Monckton
Richard Brinsley Sheridan, esq.

Re-elected
Re-elected

STAMFORD, *Linconshire.*

Sir G. Howard, K. B.
Earl of Carysfort, K. S. P.

Re-elected
Re-elected

STEYNING,

*Election in 1790.**Election in 1796.***STEYNING, *Suffex.***Samuel Whitbread, esq.
John Henniker Major, esq.J. Martin Lloyd
Re-elected**STOCKBRIDGE, *Hants.***Jof. F. Barham, esq.
George Porter, esq.Re-elected 104
Re-elected 97
Colonel Bulkely. 19**SUDBURY, *Suffolk.***Tho. C. Crespigny, esq.
J. C. Hippsley, esq.Sir James Marriott
W. Smith**SUFFOLK.**Sir T. C. Bunbury, bart.
Sir John Rous, bart.Re-elected
Re-elected**SURRY.**Lord William Russell
Sir J. Frederick, bart.Re-elected
Re-elected**SUSSEX.**Rt. Hon. Thomas Pelham
Charles Lenox, esq.Re-elected
Re-elected**TAMWORTH, *Staffordshire***John Courtenay, esq.
Robert Peel, esq.Thomas Carter
Re-elected**TAVISTOCK, *Devonshire.***Rt Hon. Richard Fitzpatrick
Lord John RussellRe-elected
Re-elected**TAUNTON, *Somersetshire.***Sir Benjamin Hammet, kt.
Alex. Popham, esq.Re-elected
W. Morland**TEWKESBURY, *Gloucestershire.***James Martin, esq.
William Dowdeswell, esq.Re-elected 296
Re elected 296
P. Moore 100
P Francis 168**THETFORD, *Norfolk.***Robert John Buxton, esq.
Joseph Randyll Burch, esq.J. Harrison
Re-elected**THIRSKE, *Yorkshire.***Sir G. Page Turner, bart.
Robert Vyner, esq.Re-elected
Sir T. Frankland**TIVERTON, *Devonshire.***Rt Hon. Dudley Ryder
Hon. Richard RyderRe-elected
Re-elected**TOTNESS**

Election in 1790.

Election in 1796.

TOTNESS, Devonshire.

W. P. Powlett, esq.
F. Buller Yarde, esq.

Lord Arden	.	.	.	.	50
Lord G. Seymour	.	.	.	.	42
Colonel Harcourt	.	.	.	.	15

TREGONY, Cornwall.

Mathew Montague, esq.
Hon. Robert Stewart

Sir L. Copley
J. Nichols

TRURO, Cornwall.

James Gordon, jun. esq.
Earl of Wiltshire

J. Levison Gower
J. Lemon

WALLINGFORD, Berkshire.

Sir Francis Sykes, bart.
Francis William Sykes, esq.

Re-elected
Lord Eardley

WAREHAM, Dorsetshire.

Lord Robert Spencer
Richard Smith, esq.

Re-elected
— Ellis

WARWICKSHIRE.

Sir G. Shuckburgh Evelyn, bart.
Sir J. Mordaunt, bart L.L.D.

Re-elected
Re-elected

WARWICK TOWN.

Lord Arden
Hon. Geo. Villiers

S. R. Gaussen
Re-elected

WELLS CITY.

Clement Tudway, esq.
Henry Berk. Portman, esq.

Re-elected
Re-elected

WENDOVER, Bucks.

John Barker Church, esq.
Lord Hugh Seymour

Heley Addington
G. Ganning

WENLOCK, Shropshire.

Cecil Forrester, esq.
Hon. John Simpson

Re-elected
Re-elected

WEOBLEY, Herefordshire.

Sir John Scott, knt.
Lord George Thynne

Lord J. Thynne
Re-elected

WESTBURY, Wiltshire.

Samuel Eitwick, esq.
Ed. Wilbraham Bootle, esq.

Sir H. Paulett
Sir H. P. St. John Mildmay

WEST LOOE, Cornwall.

Sir John De la Pole
John Pardoe, esq.

J. Buller
S. Sitwell

WESTMINSTER CITY.

Right H. C. J. Fox
Lord Hood

Re-elected	.	.	.	.	5160
Sir Alan Gardner	.	.	.	.	4810
J. H. Took	.	.	.	.	2819

WEST-

*Election in 1796.**Election in 1796.*

WESTMORELAND.

Sir Mic. Le Fleming, bart.	Re-elected
James Lowther, esq.	Re-elected

WEYMOUTH AND MELCOMBE.

Sir James Pulteney, bart.	Re-elected
Sir R. Johnstone Bempde, bart.	W. Garthshore
Andrew Stuart, esq.	Re-elected
Gabriel Tucker Steward, esq.	Re-elected

WHITCHURCH, *Hampshire.*

Viscount Middleton	Hon. W. Broderick
Hon. John Thomas Townshend	Re-elected

WIGAN, *Lancashire.*

John Cotes, esq.	Re-elected
Hon. Orlando Bridgman	Re-elected

WILTON, *Wiltshire.*

Viscount Fitzwilliam	Re-elected
Philip Goldsworthy, esq.	Re-elected

WILTSHIRE.

Amb. Goddard, esq.	Re-elected
Henry Pen. Wyndham, esq.	Re-elected

WINCHELSEA, *Suffex.*

Richard Barwell, esq.	Re-elected
John Heley Addington, esq.	W. Currie

WINCHESTER CITY.

Henry Penton, esq.	Lord Palmerstone
Sir Richard Gamon, bart.	Re-elected

WINDSOR, *Berks.*

Earl of Mornington	Henry Isherwood
W. Grant, esq.	R. F. Greville

WOODSTOCK, *Oxfordshire.*

Sir H. W. Dashwood, bart.	Re-elected
Lord Lavington	Re-elected

WORCESTERSHIRE.

William Lygon, esq.	Re-elected
Hon. Edward Foley	Re-elected

WORCESTER CITY.

Edmund Wigley, esq.	Re-elected
Ed. Lechmere, jun. esq.	Abraham Roberts

WOTTON BASSET, *Wiltshire.*

Viscount Downe	John Denison
John Thomas Stanley, esq.	Edward Clarke

CHIPPING-

Election in 1790.

Election in 1796.

CHIPPING-WYCOMBE, *Berks.*

Earl of Wycomb
Sir Francis Baring

Re-elected
Sir J. Dashwood King

YARMOUTH, *Norfolk.*

Stephen Howe, esq.
Charles Townshend

Re-elected
Lord C. Townshend, *dead.*

YARMOUTH, *Hampshire.*

Sir J. Flemng Leicester, bart.
Jervoise Clerke Jervoise, esq.

E. Rushworth
Re-elected

YORKSHIRE.

William Wilberforce, esq.
Henry Duncombe, esq.

Re-elected
H. Lascelles

YORK CITY.

Sir W. M. Milner, bart.
Richard Slater Milnes, esq.

Re-elected
Re-elected

SCOTLAND.

Election in 1790.

Election in 1796.

ABERDEENSHIRE.

James Ferguson, esq.

Re-elected

AIRSHIRE.

Sir Adam Ferguson, bart.

Col. Montgomery

ARGYLESHIRE.

Lord Frederick Campbell

Re-elected

BANFSHIRE.

David M'Dowal Grant esq.

William Grant

BERWICKSHIRE.

Patrick Home, esq.

Hon. George Baillie
Sir Alex. Don

47
19

CAITHNESS AND BUTE

Sir John Sinclair, bart.

Hon. John Stuart

CROMARTIE AND NAIRN.

Duncan Davidson, esq.

Hen. Fred. Campbell

DUMFRIES.

*Election in 1790.**Election in 1796.*

DUMBARTONSHIRE.

Sir Arch. Edmonstone, bart. W. Cunyngham Bontine

DUMFRIESSHIRE.

Sir Robert Laurie, bart. Re-elected

EDINBURGHSHIRE.

Robert Dundas, esq. Re-elected

ELGINSHIRE.

Lewis Alex. Grant, jun. esq. James Brodie

FIFESHIRE.

William Wemyss, esq. Sir William Erskine

FORFARSHIRE.

David Scott, esq. Sir David Carnegie

HADDINGTONSHIRE.

Hugh Hamilton Dalrymple, jun. esq. Re-elected

INVERNESSHIRE.

Norman Macleod, esq. — Frazer, jun.

KINCARDINESHIRE.

Robert Barclay, esq. Re-elected

KINROSSHIRE.

George Graham, esq. Sir Ra'ph Abercrombie

KIRCUDERBRIGHTSHIRE.

Patrick Heron, esq. Re-elected

LANERKSHIRE.

Sir J. S. Denham, bart. Re-elected

LINLITHGOWSHIRE.

Hon. John Hope Re-elected

ORKNEY AND ZETLAND.

John Balfour, esq. Re-elected

PEEBLESSHIRE.

William Montgomery, esq. Re-elected

PERTHSHIRE.

Thomas Graham, esq. Re-elected

RENFREWSHIRE.

John Shaw Stewart, esq. Boyd Alexander

ROSSHIRE.

Francis Humberstone Mackenzie, esq. Sir Charles Ross, bart.

*Election in 1790.**Election in 1790.*

	ROXBURGHSHIRE.
Sir George Douglas, bart.	Re-elected
	SELKIRKSHIRE.
Mark Pringle, esq.	Re-elected
	STIRLINGSHIRE.
Robert Graham, esq.	Hon. Keith Elphinstone
	SUTHERLANDSHIRE.
James Grant, esq.	Sir John Sinclair
	WIGTOWNSHIRE.
Andrew McDowall, esq.	Hon. W. Steward

ROYAL BURGHS.

*Election in 1790.**Election in 1796.*

	EDINBURGH CITY.
Right Hon. Henry Dundas	Re-elected
	<i>Tain, Dingwall, Dornock, Wick, and Kirkwall.</i>
Sir Charles Ross, bart.	William Dundas
	<i>Fortrose, Inverness, Nairn and Forres.</i>
Sir Hect. Munro, K. B.	Re-elected
	<i>Elgin, Bamff, Cullen, Kintore, and Inverourie.</i>
Alexander Brodie, esq.	Re-elected
	<i>Aberdeen, Aberbrothock, Montrose, Brechin, Inverberrie.</i>
Alexander Allardyce, esq.	Re-elected
	<i>Pertb, Dundee, St. Andrew's, Forfar, and Cupar.</i>
George Murray, esq.	David Scott
	<i>Anstruther east and west, Pittenwee, Crail, and Kilrenny.</i>
William Dundas, esq.	John Anstruther
	<i>Dysart, Kirkaldy, Bruntisland, and Kinghorn.</i>
Hon. Charles Hope	Sir James St. Clair Erskine
	<i>Stirling, Innerkithen, Dumfries, Queensferry, and Culrois.</i>
Hon. Mr. Cochrane	Col. A. C. Johnstone

Glasgow,

Election in 1790.

Election in 1796.

Glasgow, Dumbarton, Renfrew, and Ruthclerglen.

William M'Dowall, esq:

Re-elected

Fedburgh, Haddington, Dunbar, North-Berwick, and Lauder.

Hon. Thomas Maitland

Robert Baird

Peebles, Lanerk, Linlithgow, and Selkirk.

William Grieve, esq.

Lord Stopford

Dumfries, Sanquhar, Kirkcudbright, Lochmaben, and Annan.

Patrick Miller, jun. esq.

Alexander Hope

Wigtown, Whitburn, New Galloway, and Stranraer.

Nesbitt Balfour, esq.

J. Spalding

Air, Irwine, Rothsay, Inverary, and Campbeltown.

John Campbell, esq.

Re-elected

FINIS.

WOODFALL'S

PARLIAMENTARY REPORTS.

During the first Session of the Eighteenth Parliament
of Great Britain.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 1796.

HIS MAJESTY'S COMMISSION.

ABOUT two o'clock, the *Lord Chancellor* having arrived at the House, the *Archbishop of Canterbury*, and the *Lord President of the Council* (*Earl of Chatham*) appeared in their robes, and with the *Lord Chancellor*, who was the other commissioner, took their seats on the throne.

The Usher of the Black Rod (*Sir Francis Molyneux*) was then sent to the House of Commons, to require their attendance. In a few minutes the Black Rod returned, followed by about two hundred of the Commons. The Commission for calling the Parliament together was then opened and read; after which,

The Lord Chancellor, said;

“ *My Lords, and Gentlemen of the House of Commons,*

“ We are commissioned by his Majesty to inform you, that he defers acquainting you with the weighty and important matters, which at the present moment have induced him to call his Parliament together, till such time as you, gentlemen, shall have chosen for yourselves a Speaker; it is therefore his Majesty's pleasure that you return to your own chamber of Parliament, and chuse your Speaker, and that you attend at the bar of this House at twelve o'clock tomorrow, to present your Speaker for his Majesty's approbation.”

The Commons then withdrew, and the House was cleared below the bar for prayers. As soon as these were over, the *Lord Chancellor* was sworn in by himself, and then all the

old Peers, who were present,* took the usual oaths and their seats. Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

CHOICE OF A SPEAKER.

A short time after the return of the members to their own House,

Lord *Frederik Campbell*, said

Mr. Htafell,

In obedience to his Majesty's commands, and in the exercise of the antient and undoubted right of this House; we are now assembled to elect a fit person to sit in that chair and be our Speaker. That is to establish order, regularity, temper, dispatch, and of course effect in all our proceedings; and this at a time when the very being of this country, and perhaps the quiet of all Europe depend upon the wisdom and the result of our deliberations.

In looking round this House, we see many men of great abilities, splendid talents, greater abilities than perhaps ever adorned this or any other country.

To great abilities some have added great industry, in searching out the grounds and principles upon which the orders and rules of this House, and the law of parliament have been so wisely framed.

Many we know have, and all I trust in this parliament will have a jealous eye to the rights and privileges of this House.

* The following Noblemen were present in the House of Peers:

Duke of Clarence	Earl Macartney.
Gloucester	Viscount Falmouth
Bedford	Lords Chancellor
Portland, and	Grenville
Dorset	Hood
Marquis of Donnegal	Bagot
Earls Sandwich	Walsingham
Chatham	Le Despencer
Liverpool	Auckland
Plymouth	Seymour, and
Gainborough	Gwydir
Spencer	Archbishop of Canterbury
Westmoland	Bishops of London
Exeter	St. David's, and
Northesk	Rocheiter.
Galloway, and	

Several of the newly created Peers (the Earl of Liverpool, late Lord Hawkesbury, Baron Macartney Earl Macartney in Ireland, Baron Stewart Earl of Galloway, and Baron Gwydir, (late Sir Peter Burrell), were introduced with the usual ceremonies, sworn in and took their seats.

The Lords are to meet this day at two o'clock.

In such an assembly sir, there cannot be wanting many persons who might fill that chair with credit to themselves and advantage to the publick.

But in this hour of difficulty and danger, we have no occasion to resort to conjecture; experience is a safe unerring guide.

Fortunately for us and the Commons of Great Britain whom we represent; there is a gentleman returned to this parliament, who in that chair year after year has shewn that he is able to assist the wisest, and ready to instruct the weakest.

Who in that chair has shewn a mind as independent as his fortune.

Who in that chair has shewn a temper not to be ruffled; a firmness not to be shaken; sure presages of rigid uniform impartiality.

Who in that chair has watched over the rights and privileges of this House as over the palladium of the liberties of our free constitution—singularly free constitution where men may be at once true to freedom and faithful to their King.

Who in that chair—but I will no longer press upon the delicate feelings of a truly great mind; but hasten to make that proposal which with infinite satisfaction I perceive the whole House is impatient that I should make, which is that the Right Hon. Henry Addington be called to the chair of this House to be our Speaker.

Mr. *Peruys* declared that never since he had enjoyed the honour of a seat in that House, had he ever seconded a motion with greater confidence and self-satisfaction than he did that of the noble lord, nor could he help availing himself of the opportunity now presented of paying a tribute of respect and applause to the name of the member who had been proposed to fill the distinguished office of the Speaker of the House of Commons. The friendship which he enjoyed with that honourable gentleman enabled him to judge of his private worth and his rare endowments; it was not however on the ground of personal esteem, nor on his knowledge of his valuable qualifications for the discharge of the important office for which he had been proposed, that he now supported his nomination, but on the ground of reasons of a higher nature, reasons to the truth of which he could produce the most unquestionable testimony. He appealed to the evidence of such gentlemen as had the honour of sitting in the last parliament, for the memory of which he entertained a high respect. Upon the recorded proofs of his discharge of the various duties of that important situation, he rested the support which he now gave to the proposal.

At an early period after the honourable gentleman's introduction to that house, when it was proposed to raise him to that office, some objection had been made to an elevation so permanent, and some doubts were entertained of his qualifications for the office on account of his youth and presumed inexperience. The conduct of the house, however, was justified by the event,

Dignus imperare, nisi imperasset,

was the character given of a great Roman Emperor. Far was it from his intention to apply the converse of that *dictum* to the right honourable gentleman, who had early proved how groundlessly all objections and doubts as to his qualification for the office had been entertained. He soon convinced them that it was not on one splendid and brilliant display that he rested the reputation of his talents, but that he had attained a maturity of intellect which could command respect, and an extent of information that applied to every occasion. He had uniformly evinced an integrity the most unshaken, an understanding the most cultivated, a judgment the most enlightened, a knowledge the most comprehensive; in the execution of his office, an acquaintance not merely with the rules and forms of the house, but with the constitution of Parliament. In all his behaviour he had displayed the utmost impartiality; in explaining difficulties he had ever been clear and satisfactory. He could not help calling to the recollection of those who had sat in the last parliament, the leading points of that honourable gentleman's discharge of his important office, his attention and assiduity, his zeal for the honour of the House, and his support of decorum and dignity. They would recollect also how much the House was indebted to him for his conduct in a recent instance, in a matter not within the ordinary duties which that situation imposed. He would not enumerate the particular occasions on which the honourable gentleman had supported the dignity of the chair and the honour of the House, and the different qualities by which he was recommended to their choice. But if he had maintained the dignity of the House as high as it had ever been carried by the most revered of his predecessors; if in no instance he had endeavoured to suppress the freedom of opinion; if he had never evinced partiality in the exercise of his functions; if his carriage had been calculated to impress the highest respect upon every mind; if his manners had gained the esteem and conciliated the regard, even of those who, unfortunately, were little disposed to agree upon other matters, he should not perhaps be thought too sanguine in his hopes of the success of the noble lord's motion

motion, which he had the honour to second. Indeed he considered that they were merely the instruments of bringing forward in the regular shape a proposal, already anticipated by every member, and that the voice of the mover and seconder would be lost in the general assent to call the right honourable gentleman to the chair.

General *Tarleton* professed his entire acquiescence in all the sentiments which had been expressed by the noble lord who proposed the motion, and almost in every thing that had been said by the honourable gentleman who seconded it. He would not, he said, detain the House by particularizing the points in which he differed from the latter, but he heartily joined with both in opinion, that it was impossible to find any person better qualified to fill the important office of Speaker to the House of Commons, than the right hon. Henry Addington. They had had ample experience of the urbanity of his manners, of the even firmness of his temper, and of his extensive knowledge and zealous attachment to the constitutional forms of the House. He was happy also to add another point which had not been mentioned, and which to him was not the smallest of his recommendations: his impartial attention to that side of the House on which he had the honour to sit, a circumstance which was their best defence against the pride of office, and the arrogance of insolent majorities.

Mr. *Addington* said that it would have been highly gratifying to him, if, consistently with the respect he owed to the House, and consistently with the dignity of the office which they were now met to fill, he could have permitted the proposition which had been made to have been decided without any observations from him. It could not be imagined that he could remain insensible to the honour conferred upon him by the noble lord who was the author of the motion, nor to the liberal manner in which it had been supported by the honourable gentleman; least of all would it be supposed that he could be wanting in veneration for the august assembly before whom he had the honour to speak, or deficient in respect for the dignity of the honourable office to which he had been proposed, for what assembly can be more venerable than that which is composed of the representatives of the Commons of Great Britain; or what office can be more respectable than to preside in that House, which forms one of the branches of the constitution? When he considered the combination of talents that were requisite to fill that situation, and when he recollected the importance of the duties connected with it, he was sensible that there were many grounds

grounds of objection to the motion of the noble lord. Since the experience of last parliament had been mentioned, he could not omit the opportunity of expressing his sense of the indulgence he had received from it, and of the need which he had of that indulgence. On entering upon the office which he had then the honour to hold, he brought with him a firm attachment to the constitution of the country, without which no man was worthy to be a member of that House, and he was free to say, that he had never intentionally swerved from that integrity which it is so satisfactory, on recollection, to have preserved in any situation, nor from that independence which was so necessary in that distinguished situation to which he had been raised by the voice of that House. In the maintenance of its rules, and the regular dispatch of business, on which its character and dignity so much depend, he confessed himself to have been infinitely indebted, not merely for the support which he had uniformly received in his official capacity, but also for that gracious indulgence which he had frequently experienced, and for which he now returned his warmest acknowledgements to every individual without distinction. He would not, he said, detain the House any longer, but conclude with expressing his earnest wish that their decision, in which he should most respectfully acquiesce, might be dictated by wisdom directed to the public benefit.

Mr. Addington was then called to the chair by the unanimous voice of the House, and when he had taken it, he returned his warmest thanks for the honour they had done him, the value of which, he said, was much enhanced by the way in which it was conferred.

Mr. Secretary Dundas congratulated the Speaker upon the situation to which he was raised, and he at the same time congratulated the House and the public upon the office being filled by a person who was so eminently calculated to discharge its functions. As there was nothing which he could say which had not been anticipated by the public feeling, *Mr. Dundas* said, he would not dwell longer upon the subject, but would merely move the adjournment of the House.

The House adjourned till the next day, when they will present their speaker at the bar of the House of Lords for his Majesty's approbation.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, *September 28.*

Soon after twelve o'clock, the Speaker of the House of Commons, accompanied by such members as had been previously

ously sworn in by the Lord High Steward, attended in obedience to a summons from the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod at the bar of the House of Lords, where he was presented to the members of his Majesty's Commission.

Mr. *Addington*, the newly elected Speaker, addressed the commission in a short speech, in which he said that the Commons in obedience to his majesty's command, had chosen a Speaker from their own body, and that he was the person who had had the honour of being appointed to fill that office. If, however, his Majesty was of opinion that any disadvantage would result from that choice to the interest of his faithful Commons, he begged that his Majesty would withhold his approbation, and give them an opportunity to make a new election.

The *Lord Chancellor*, in the name of the Commission, said, that he had it in command from his Majesty to declare his entire approbation of the choice which his faithful Commons had made of a Speaker, whom his Majesty knew from experience was possessed of talents eminently adapted for the discharge of the functions of that office.

The *Speaker* replied that as his Majesty had been graciously pleased to approve of and confirm the choice which the House of Commons had made of him as a Speaker, it became his duty to return his warmest acknowledgments for this additional testimony to those which he had already received of his royal grace and favour. When he considered of the nature of the arduous office to which he was appointed, he felt himself inadequate to the task which it imposed. He flattered himself, however, that he would not be wanting either in uprightness of intention, or in attachment to the forms and constitution of the House, in which he was appointed to preside. And for those errors into which he might unintentionally fall, he humbly requested his Majesty's royal indulgence, hoping, at the same time, that his majesty would ascribe them solely to him, and not to his faithful Commons.

He then in the name of the Commons of Great Britain, claimed of his Majesty, by petition, the antient rights and privileges of that House: that the persons, estates, and servants of its members be secured against arrest, and every kind of molestation; that their accustomed liberty of speech and of debate be preserved; and that, on all proper occasions, they shall have free access to his royal presence.

The *Lord Chancellor* declared, that he had it in command from his Majesty to assure the Speaker, that, in order to inspire his faithful Commons with zeal and confidence in the discharge of their duty, they should enjoy their ancient rights
and

and privileges to the same extent as any of their predecessors; and that every part of their conduct should meet the most favourable construction in his royal breast.

The *Speaker* then withdrew, at the head of the members of the House of Commons; and the House of Peers adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

When the *Speaker* had returned from the House of Lords and taken the chair, he acquainted the House, that he had been in the House of Peers, and that his Majesty had been graciously pleased, by commission, to approve of and to confirm their choice of him as a *Speaker*. It was his earnest wish, that he might approve himself worthy of the honour they had conferred upon him by the manner in which he performed the duties of the office. He had, in the name of the House, claimed by petition from his Majesty, all the ancient rights and privileges of the Commons of Great Britain, exemption from arrest and every kind of molestation for their persons, servants and estates, liberty of speech and of debate, and free access to the Royal presence on all proper occasions; and in answer to his claim by petition, he had his Majesty's Royal assurance that they should enjoy all these rights and privileges to the same extent as any of their predecessors. In the discharge of the functions with which he was invested, he was sensible that he stood much in need of indulgence, and he had no doubt that he should receive it. It could not but be obvious to every gentleman, that order, regularity, and decorum were absolutely necessary to give dignity and dispatch to their proceedings. The support, therefore, which he had formerly experienced in enforcing the rules of the House, he hoped would be continued.

The *Speaker* then took the oaths of allegiance to his Majesty, &c. and the rest of the sitting was occupied in swearing in the members.

Adjourned till to-morrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, *Sept.* 29, and FRIDAY, *Sept.* 30,

Were occupied in swearing in members and adjourned to Wednesday.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, *Oct.* 5.

The following new Peers took the customary oaths and their seats—Viscount Newark; Viscount Middleton, of the kingdom.

kingdom of Ireland, as a British baron, by the title of Lord Broderick; Lord Hood; Lord Bridport; Lord Dunstonville; Lord Rous; Lord Calthorpe; Lord Rolle; and Lord Cawdor.

Lord Holland took his seat on his coming of age.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 5.

The House met at twelve o'clock, and continued swearing in members till four; and then adjourned till next day.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, October 6.

His Majesty arrived at the House of Lords at half past two, and being seated on the Throne in his usual state, the Commons were sent for by the Usher of the Black Rod; as soon as they attended at the bar, his Majesty addressed both Houses in the following most gracious Speech.

" My Lords and Gentlemen,

" It is a peculiar satisfaction to me, in the present conjuncture of affairs, to recur to your advice, after the recent opportunity which has been given for collecting the sense of my people, engaged in a difficult and arduous contest, for the preservation of all that is most dear to us.

" I have omitted no endeavours for setting on foot negotiations to restore peace to Europe, and to secure for the future the general tranquillity.—The steps which I have taken for this purpose have at length opened the way to an immediate and direct negotiation, the issue of which must either produce the desirable end of a just, honourable, and solid peace for us, and for our allies, or must prove, beyond dispute, to what cause alone the prolongation of the calamities of war must be ascribed.

" I shall immediately send a person to Paris with full powers to treat for this object, and it is my anxious wish that this measure may lead to the restoration of general peace: but you must be sensible that nothing can so much contribute to give effect to this desire, as your manifesting that we possess both the determination and the resources to oppose, with increased activity and energy, the further efforts with which we may have to contend.

" You will feel this peculiarly necessary at a moment when the enemy has openly manifested the intention of attempting a descent on these kingdoms.—It cannot be doubted what would be the issue of such an enterprize; but it befits your wisdom to neglect no precautions that may either preclude the attempt,

or secure the speediest means of turning it to the confusion and ruin of the enemy.

" In reviewing the events of the year, you will have observed that, by the skill and exertions of my navy, our extensive and increasing commerce has been protected to a degree almost beyond example, and the fleets of the enemy have, for the greatest part of the year, been blocked up in their own ports.

The operations in the East and West Indies have been highly honourable to the British arms, and productive of great national advantage; and the valour and good conduct of my forces, both by sea and land, have been eminently conspicuous.

The fortune of war on the Continent has been more various, and the progress of the French armies threatened, at one period, the utmost danger to all Europe; but from the honourable and dignified perseverance of my ally the Emperor, and from the intrepidity, discipline, and invincible spirit of the Austrian forces, under the auspicious conduct of the Archduke Charles, such a turn has lately been given to the course of the war, as may inspire a well grounded confidence that the final result of the campaign will prove more disastrous to the enemy than its commencement and progress for a time were favourable to their hopes.

" The apparently hostile dispositions and conduct of the Court of Madrid have led to discussions of which I am not yet enabled to acquaint you with the final result; but I am confident that whatever may be their issue, I shall have given to Europe a further proof of my moderation and forbearance; and I can have no doubt of your determination to defend, against every aggression, the dignity, rights, and interests of the British empire.

" Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

" I rely on your zeal and public spirit for such supplies as you may think necessary for the service of the year. It is a great satisfaction to me to observe that, notwithstanding the temporary embarrassments which have been experienced, the state of the commerce, manufactures, and revenue of the country, proves the real extent and solidity of our resources, and furnishes you such means as must be equal to any exertions which the present crisis may require.

" My Lords and Gentlemen,

" The distresses which were in the last year experienced from the scarcity of corn are now, by the blessing of God, happily removed, and an abundant harvest affords the pleasing prospect of relief in that important article to the labouring classes of the community.—Our internal tranquillity has also continued undisturbed:—the general attachment of my people to the British constitution has appeared on every occasion, and the endeavours of those who wished to introduce anarchy and confusion into this country, have been repressed by the energy and wisdom of the laws.

" To

“ To defeat all the designs of our enemies, to restore to my people the blessings of a secure and honourable peace, to maintain inviolate their religion, laws, and liberty, and to deliver down unimpaired to the latest posterity, the glory and happiness of these kingdom, is the constant wish of my heart, and the uniform end of all my actions.—In every measure that can conduce to these objects, I am confident of receiving the firm, zealous, and affectionate support of my parliament.

His Majesty then retired, and after the Speech had been read by the Lord Chancellor on the woolsack, and the clerk at the table.

Earl *Bathurst* rose to move an Address of Thanks for his Majesty's Speech. The earl said, that he thought it necessary to intreat their lordship's attention and indulgence, as he found that in addition to the embarrassments he laboured under from a diffidence of his own abilities, the vast and interesting importance of the subject on which he had to move their lordships was such, as to impose a much heavier weight on him than he feared he should be able to sustain in the manner he could wish. He had no doubt, he said, but that the House would be unanimous in agreeing to address his Majesty, and to return their humble and sincere thanks for the gracious communication he had been pleased to make to them in the Speech just delivered from the throne; but before he moved it, he begged leave to offer a few reasons, which weighed considerably upon his mind, in causing him to form this conclusion. His lordship then took notice of the very arduous and important contest in which this country had for so many years been involved with the French. Various, he said, had been the turns of fortune, and the vicissitudes of war since it first began; and as he was certain every one who heard him was convinced that a safe and honourable peace, on a solid and permanent basis, must be considered at this moment, as an essential step to the repose, not only of this country, but of all Europe, he had not the smallest doubt, but that every noble lord present, would heartily join in returning thanks to his Majesty for his most gracious information, that, “ engaged as we are in an arduous and difficult contest for the preservation of all we hold most dear, his Majesty had omitted no endeavours for setting on foot negotiations for restoring peace and general tranquillity to Europe.” His lordship then adverted to the measure which his Majesty had assured the House he had determined upon, of sending a person immediately to Paris with full powers to treat upon the subject, and said, it was certainly matter

of congratulation to their lordships, that an opening having been made to a direct and instantaneous negotiation, they had his Majesty's royal assurance, that it is his anxious wish the measure may lead to the restoration of a general peace. At the same time, the earl said, that he was sure it would be totally unnecessary for him to press upon their lordships the necessity there would be, in case this negotiation should fail in its effect, from the haughty demeanour, or extravagant terms which might be demanded by the French Directory, to unite as one man, and by combining the great resources of this country with that zeal, activity, and unanimity which such a situation would call upon their lordships and the whole nation to do, especially as the enemy had threatened a descent on these kingdoms, he had no doubt but we should be able to repel every hostile attempt in as brave and gallant a manner as we had ever heretofore done. The earl delivered a spirited eulogium on the skill and courage of our naval commanders, and the great exertions which had been made by them in every quarter of the globe. He then touched upon the scene of the war, as carried on upon the continent, and the rapid and astonishing successes of the enemy in the commencement of the present campaign. Successes, my Lords, said he, which threatened at one time to overturn the whole long tried and well poised system of the Germanic empire; successes which threatened our great and good ally the emperor even in this very capital; and which have at the same time, given proofs of a greatness of courage and constancy of mind under the most dispiriting circumstances, which redound in the highest degree to his honour as a faithful ally, and which have proved, beyond a doubt, that to his magnanimity of soul in the hour of the utmost danger, aided and assisted by the unexampled bravery, zeal, and activity of the Archduke Charles, had under the blessing of heaven, been owing the preservation, of the liberties and rights of the Germanic body, and the same cause would, he hoped and trusted, prove a means of producing such cool and temperate reflections in the minds of the French Directory, as might induce them to descend from those haughty and extensive pretensions which they might otherwise perhaps have thought themselves justified in persisting to have fulfilled. With regard to the apparently hostile dispositions and conduct of the court of Madrid, his lordship said, that as his majesty had informed the House, they had led to discussions, of which he was not yet enabled to acquaint their lordships, it did not become him
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in that place to say any thing respecting them, farther than that they might rely with confidence that nothing would be omitted to secure the blessings of peace. He had no doubt, he said, but whatever steps his Majesty might hereafter be pleased or necessitated to take in that business, they would convey to all Europe additional proofs of his Majesty's moderation and forbearance, and of his determination to defend the rights of Englishmen and the dignity of the nation against every enemy. His lordship congratulated the House on the flourishing state of the manufactures, revenues, commerce, and general resources of the country, which he doubted not would be fully adequate to every necessary exertion, both by sea and land; and also on the abundance of the late harvest, which had removed those distresses the poorer classes of the people had for a long time past had to struggle with, in consequence of the great scarcity of corn. That the tranquillity of the country had been preserved inviolate, and the views and intentions of those who wished to stir up anarchy and confusion, had been in every respect completely frustrated by the wisdom and energy of the laws. His lordship concluded a very elegant speech, replete with antithesis and forcible expression, with declaring in glowing terms the grateful sense he entertained of his Majesty's paternal assurance that it was his anxious desire to secure a general peace on terms justly honourable and solid. Any other termination of hostilities, he said their lordship, must all be convinced, would be a peace without honour, and a truce without security. After apologizing for having so long trespassed on their lordships indulgence, he moved the address which was, as usual, a direct echo to the Speech.

The *Earl of Upper Ossory* rose to second the motion. His lordship said, that after what had been so very ably advanced in support of the address by the noble mover, it would not be necessary for him to trouble their lordships at any great length upon the subject. Some few observations he would however beg leave to make, for which he hoped their lordships would favor him with their indulgence, and to deserve it, he would endeavour to trespass on their lordship's time as little as possible. The earl observed, that had his Majesty come down to the House the preceding day and delivered his speech, he could not have communicated, what constituted the strongest and leading feature of the gracious Speech which they had just heard delivered from the throne, *viz.* the positive assurance given by his Majesty, that he had taken steps, which had opened the way to a direct and im-

mediate

mediate negotiation, which must prove in the result of it, beyond dispute, either to what cause alone the prolongation of the calamities of war is to be ascribed, or be the means of producing peace upon a just, solid and permanent basis. That he believed was what every man among their lordships, and even in the whole country devoutly wished; and was therefore in a particular manner, a subject, which he was sure could not fail of obtaining their lordships ready and unanimous concurrence in an address of thanks. His Majesty's speech justly treated with contempt the design of an invasion, but at the same time with great prudence and wisdom recommended every precaution which such an enterprise required. His Majesty's speech likewise contained a just compliment to the conduct of our ally, the Emperor, for never on any occasion had more firmness been displayed than by the Imperial councils, or more vigour and talents than were manifested by the Archduke Charles, and their lordships must be aware, that the victories of the Archduke were not only to be considered as great and glorious events in favour of the Emperor and the German empire, but as most seriously important and essentially conducive to the interests of Great Britain. It was not merely probable that the result of the campaign would be more disastrous to its enemy, than the commencement had been favourable, for it already seemed that two of their armies were completely destroyed. With regard to Spain it was impossible to pronounce as yet any opinion, but we might rely with safety on his Majesty's integrity, and be assured of his anxious endeavours to secure the blessings of peace. It was a pleasing consideration that the prospect of plenty was restored, and that the prevalence of internal tranquillity was announced. Their lordships, he was persuaded, were convinced, that to maintain the blessings of the constitution, and to transmit them to posterity, were the first object of his Majesty's heart, and the great rule of his actions. Having thus touched lightly and as he said, incompetently, on the principal topics of the speech, the earl declared he had only to return his thanks to their lordships for the indulgence with which he had been heard, and give his support to the amendment.

As soon as the address had been read by the Lord Chancellor,

Earl Fitzwilliam and the *Earl of Guildford* rose together but the latter gave way.

Earl Fitzwilliam then addressed himself to their Lordships in a long speech, delivered in so low a tone that it rendered it

it difficult to collect his sentiments; as far as they could be collected they were to this effect. That it was with a considerable degree of embarrassment that he rose at any time to address their lordships, and that this embarrassment was by no means lessened on the present occasion, as he did not know but in what he had to offer to the House, he should perhaps stand in the forlorn situation of being entirely single in his opinion. Be that as it might, however, he found it necessary to his own feelings of what was right, to rise then in order to deliver his sentiments, to object to much that he had found in his Majesty's speech from the throne, (which he had a right constitutionally to consider as the speech of the minister,) and give his opposition to the address, and to request the favour of their lordships attention, while he assigned his reasons for so doing. "I could not before this day, said his lordship, have learnt what I now know; I could not expect to find the common means recommended for the attainment of peace, usually practised in common wars. In the speech from the throne, in the speeches of the noble lords, the mover and seconder of the address, I find not the slightest mention of those principles on which this just and necessary war, for just and necessary it is, commenced, those serious and important principles on which I, at least, conceived it to have been begun, and I at that time thought other noble lords gave their support to the prosecution of the war on the same grounds. When I first agreed with several others to give my support to his Majesty's ministers, in their determination to enter upon and prosecute the present just and necessary war, I did it, my lords, upon their assurances, and from a thorough conviction in my own mind, that it was to be carried on for the purpose of obtaining a certain specific and highly important object, which I deemed to be absolutely necessary for the general repose of Europe, and for the safety and security of every well regulated government. It was not pretended that the sword was drawn in the defence of an ally, or for any of the ordinary purposes, for which on former occasions ordinary wars have been entered upon; but it was expressly and unequivocally avowed and declared to be for "the preservation of civil society itself, and of all orderly and well regulated governments in Europe, against that dreadful system of anarchy, devastation, disorganization and bloodshed, with which the French revolution threatened every civilized society in all Europe." In order to avoid this, and to guard as much as possible against those abominable principles which this revolution had engendered,

and

and which the French were endeavouring to spread with the utmost zeal and activity over every corner of the globe, it was agreed to enter upon the present war, in order to stop so fatal an evil, and to that end nothing was deemed so truly conducive, or so certain in its power and effects, as the restoration of Hereditary Monarchy to the French nation. This was the grand and true principle on which it was originally that I gave it my support, and that support, my lords, I will always continue to give to the very utmost of my ability, so long as the true and first principle is kept in view and adhered to; but in approving of or consenting to this address, my lords, I must entirely lose sight of this first and important principle, and assent to a measure in which I conceive to be involved not only the dereliction of the principle itself, but I conceive the measure of entering upon a peace at this moment, to be as pregnant with every mischief by the spreading of the principles of disorganization and anarchy, as ever there was reason to fear would be the case in their first commencement and subsequent progress. If the adoption of the principles to which I have alluded was wise at the commencement of the war, an adherence to them is much wiser now. The system of subversion of every acknowledged principle and established institution continues still to predominate. The wisdom of the first measures which were adopted to oppose this dangerous evil I have always approved, and experience has confirmed it. What then is there now in the aspect of public affairs to require a deviation from a conduct sanctioned by policy, and justified by events? Was the system which had roused our attention and demanded our exertions extinct? or was it still the rule by which the conduct of the enemy was directed? Their lordships ought to compare the views of France at that period, with the plans which they prosecuted at present. The great and powerful governments of Europe were not first attacked by the spirit of aggression with which the enemy were actuated, but the inferior and feeble states had felt their overbearing influence and their subversive authority. The instances announced their intention, and success was to afford the means of extending the application of their principles. We might at this time observe the prevalence of the same dispositions. They were avowed in repeated proclamations, in which their determination to overturn the established order of the countries over which they could dictate, was renewed. It was not their arms which we had to dread, but the system
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which their success was accompanied. In determining upon the subject of a peace, even upon honourable terms, I would ask your lordships if you have considered the consequences of treating with the haughty Directory of France, and if you have considered them, are you prepared to meet those consequences to which it is likely to give rise? Are you prepared to see the French Directory, under the cover of a Peace, send their agents and emissaries, properly instructed to spread their baneful doctrines and principles through every part of this kingdom and its dependencies; and are you willing to receive them? I should suppose not; and yet, my lords, that this is a part of their system, and of that universal plan of disorganization which they have formed for the purpose of overturning all regular and orderly governments, I think I need only refer your lordships to the conduct they have already uniformly pursued in the dominions of those powers, who have been so unfortunate as to make peace with them. My lords, let us only turn our eyes towards Sardinia, with whose government they have made peace: there we see they have not only endeavoured to spread their horrid doctrines, but they have actually, by means of their Ambassador, interfered in the regulations of the State to such a degree, that they may almost be said to have a government of their own there. No sooner was the King of Sardinia obliged to submit to accept a peace from France, than it was succeeded by their interference in the internal administration of his government. They insisted upon his restoring to their liberty and to their effects all the persons who had been condemned to imprisonment or to penalties for the propagation of their anarchical doctrines. At Rome they had signalized their triumph by imposing the same degrading conditions. Were their lordships prepared to submit to such indignities, it were to invite such disgraceful interference. They have done the same thing in the capital of one of the most powerful Princes in Europe, the King of Prussia, who has submitted to have a French standard erected in his capital; are ministers prepared to allow them to erect a standard here? Are your lordships prepared to allow the national cockade to be worn in this country by every man whom the French Directory might chuse to consider as a Frenchman? They have done the same in Spain, where they have carried things with so high and dextrous a hand, that Spain cannot at this moment be fairly called or estimated either more or less than a province of France. By arms alone these attempts and these disgraces are to be resisted. Such

had once been the opinion which had been formed of their character, and which he still retained. Now, however, were we to make peace with a government, which proscribed all the institutions we endeavoured to protect, and threatened all the dangers which we had struggled to oppose. To these evils their lordships exposed themselves if they consented to conclude any peace, and to establish any connection with the enemies of established government and the moral and religious order of society. My lords, the questions I have already stated may not now be proper to be answered at present, and therefore I shall not press them; there is one question, however, which I may ask, and which I may call upon ministers to answer as they can do it with safety. In addition, therefore, to all this, I have to request your lordships' serious attention to another object of great magnitude and importance—and that is, with whom are you going to treat? With the people of France, of what description. The people of France as they stood under the ancient Hereditary Monarchy; or as they stood at present, in what light are we to look upon the French people in treating for a peace in regard to their limits as a nation? I would ask his Majesty's ministers if we are to view them as confined within the ancient boundaries of the kingdom—or are they prepared to see them possessed of Austrian Flanders, and all those countries west of the Rhine, and reaching from Flanders to the north west of Germany, of which they have made themselves masters, and pretend a determination to hold as an integral and indivisible part of their country? Are his Majesty's ministers prepared to see them possessed of the power and resources of those several states which they have over-run in the west of Italy; in which they have also spread their noxious principles far and wide; in which they have planted the tree of liberty, and have broached the colossal design of forming them into a Republic upon a system similar to and coincident with their own? Are they, I ask, prepared in treating for peace to allow the constitutional decree, that such parts as they have added to France shall positively remain as they are? or is it their intention to insist upon their confining themselves within their own ancient limits—limits within which our ancestors thought it of such immense importance to circumscribe them, and to effect which they so freely fought, and bled and expended their treasures for near a quarter of a century, as the only sure means by which the balance of Europe could be maintained against the powerful and ambitious attempts
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of France in favour of universal monarchy; and it was surely no trivial consideration, whether this aggrandisement was to be acknowledged, and these acquisitions were to be sanctioned. So far as his own opinion extended, this consideration, in the present case, was secondary, for his prime objection was to treat with France constituted as she is. My lords, if these conditions of territory are to be allowed to remain in their hands, what, I would ask, is to become of the Republick of Holland? What can be its fate other than that of becoming a province tributary to France? They may give it the name of a free and independent republick, but it is impossible it can ever actually be or remain so, while the French are in possession of Flanders. Nor, my lords, will the mischief by any means stop here. Are our colonies safe? Are the West India islands in a situation in which we could rely upon their tranquillity? What has been the effect of the principles of France in her own settlements? What devastation have they not produced? They have ruined their own colonies, and greatly injured ours, but they ruined their own islands upon system, and their aim was to extend their system of disorganization to our colonies. Have they not already shewn their disposition this way in two of our islands, Grenada and St. Vincent's, where they have already carried fire and sword, and every species of ruin and desolation? The effect of their principles was, to overthrow all the barriers by which property was protected, and the tendency was realized by the practice which they pursued. Even in glancing over the proceedings of their legislative bodies this day I have found that one of their reporters states, that the sale of the national property (that is, what was the property of individuals) is the pivot of revolution. And if, my lords, they have done this so effectually and extensively in two of our islands in time of war, and amidst innumerable obstacles and difficulties of every kind, what may we not expect they will be able to undertake under the cover and sanction of a peace, by means of which they will have the power of sending their emissaries to any amount of numbers, who, under pretence of trade and commerce, will have free and full opportunities in abundance to preach their doctrines, and disseminate the evils of their system? My Lords, they have pursued the same conduct of disseminating their principles among all the various nations and governments with whom they have had any connexion. Are your lordships prepared to submit to the mandates of the directory? At their command are you ready to let loose all those who have been doomed to punishment for

the propagation of sedition, and for attacks upon the constitution of the country. Are you prepared to set at liberty Mr. Yorke? to recal from Botany Bay the gentlemen who have been transported to that country? If you do not wish to involve this country in weakness, to strip it of its energy and its defence, you will pause before you proceed. When you have consented to disband our troops, and to dismantle our fleet now in the height of its power, do you imagine that we shall be able to cope with the forces of the directory wielding the combined strength of the navies of Spain and Holland? If your lordships do not wish to expose the country to these disasters, and to the calamities they may involve, you will not concur in giving to his Majesty an advice that would strike at the interests of the state, and weaken the security of his government. I am ignorant, I confess, of the powers with which the persons to whom this negotiation for peace is committed will, in all probability, be entrusted. From an observation of the noble lord who seconded the address, it appears that it was not merely for ourselves, but for our allies, that this negotiation was to be instituted. I doubt how far ministers are authorised to include them in the measures they are about to adopt. If we can gather the sentiments of the emperor from his conduct in circumstances apparently the most desperate, when three powerful armies were pressing him on every side, and had advanced nearly to his capital, he would not condescend in circumstances more propitious to treat with the enemy of established order and government. They have prevailed with the governments of Genoa and Leghorn to shut their ports against you, and in a short time perhaps you will not have a harbour from the Mediterranean to the Adriatic, to which you can export the manufactures and articles of commerce of this country. The effects which our commerce will sustain by the aggrandisement of France, are not indifferent. It is no light reflection that Holland is under the controul of the enemy, that the ports of Italy are in the hands of the enemy; that Leghorn, at once so important in war, from the supplies which it furnished, and in peace, as the great mart of our commodities and manufactures, is taken from us. All the coasts of Europe are now shut against our commerce. In Italy the establishment of a republic under the controul of France will, exclude our trade from that country, and unless the king of Naples comes boldly forward to resist the plans of the enemy, the whole of the north of Italy will be inaccessible to our
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manufactures. By commerce the nation has flourished. What, however, is to be our situation, when every port into which our commodities have flowed, is to be shut against us? Were the French to succeed in establishing a republic in Italy, it would quickly spread over that country the same poverty which in France the revolutionary government introduced. We might treat with the French directory, but what traffick could our merchants maintain with individuals who were destitute of property, or possessed it without security? The loss of Spain too is certain. By whatever name it is distinguished, whether as a monarchy or a republic, is of little consequence. It is the tributary of France, and from the tenor of the speech, I conclude, that with her too we should have to contend and with her attachment to the views of France, it followed that the sphere of our commerce would be still farther circumscribed. The facility with which the French have instilled their principles, or a predilection for them, into the people of the several states I have mentioned, shews how much we have to dread from a similar freedom of communication, and makes me entreat your lordships to pause before you adopt an address which encourages his Majesty to enter upon immediate negotiations for a peace with a people so situated, and from a free communication with whom so many evils may eventually result to us. I would further entreat his Majesty's ministers to pause before they suffer themselves to give way to ideas of peace, founded on a positive dereliction of every leading principle on which the war was commenced; totally relinquishing the salutary object of restoring monarchy in France, and decisively and unequivocally acknowledging and giving sanction to their present wild and extravagant system of universal republicks. The republick of Holland on one side, the republick or republicks of the west of Italy on the other, which may, and I fear will be but too likely to lay the foundation for the subversion of every orderly, settled, and well regulated government in Europe. My lords, by the terms of this address, I perceive it is mentioned, as I have already stated, that his Majesty's ministers offer to negotiate not only for themselves, but their allies also. This appears to me to be a very nice and delicate business. I am by no means clear that we have any right to offer decisively to negotiate for our allies, nor do I see upon what ground we can assume the power of concluding a treaty in which the emperor, our ally is to be bound without previously consulting him, and having his assent and concurrence. We are bound to
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our allies by the common ties of good faith and publick honour. We cannot desert them and make a separate peace, nay the victories of the Austrians bind us more fast to the emperor, and if we desert him shame, disgrace, and dishonour will be the consequence. For these reasons, my lords, with every respect for the noble personages who moved and seconded this address, I beg leave to offer an amendment to your lordships. His lordship moved to leave out from the words "most dear to us," in substance as follows :

"That this House, strongly impressed with the justice and necessity of the present war, carried on for the maintenance of civil and moral order in the world, and for securing the balance of power in Europe, and the independence of all States, will continue to give his Majesty a vigorous support in asserting the general cause of his Majesty and his allies, and for preserving the good faith, dignity, and honour of the Crown, in full assurance that no steps shall be taken inconsistent with those principles, or with the future safety and prosperity of these kingdoms : and should the apparently hostile dispositions of the court of Madrid, instigated by the intrigues and menaces of the common enemy, put his Majesty under the necessity of repelling force by force, his Majesty may rely on the determination of this House to give his Majesty the most ample support in defending against every aggression, the dignity, rights, and interests of the British empire."

Before he sat down, the earl said, from the nature of his Amendment and the proper place of its insertion in the address, he was necessarily obliged to include the just tribute paid to the exertions of the navy and the skill and bravery of our officers in the parts that he should move to omit ; but when he did so, he begged to have it understood, that no one of their lordships thought more highly than he did of the skill and bravery of the officers and seamen, and the exertions of the navy in general. He thought it necessary to make that declaration, but at the same time he was the less anxious on account of the omission, as he did not much flatter himself with the expectation that his amendment would meet with general support. It was sufficient for him to have done his duty in having submitted it to their lordships.

Having paid this just tribute to the exertions of the navy, the earl said, he held a paper in his hand, which had diverted him much at his breakfast that morning, and which indeed served to quiet any uneasiness he might have felt, from having learnt the tendency of his Majesty's speech, in respect to the subject of peace. It contained an official note from the directory of France, which was a gross libel on the British nation, he said, he so regarded it, as he always considered the minister employed in foreign embassy the same as the nation.

The *Lord Chancellor* having read the Amendment,

The *Earl of Guildford* said, he always felt himself happy when he could agree with his Majesty's ministers and the majority

majority of the House; conscious of what he owed to himself, and what he owed to his country, it was not frequently of late that he had been able to join in concurrence with the generality of their lordships, but on the present occasion, although he saw great reason to object to many parts of the address, he thought it more wise and prudent to forbear stating those objections, when in a season so momentous, that part of the speech which stated his Majesty's determination to send a person immediately to Paris to treat for peace so fully met with with his most cordial wishes; he was ready therefore to give his immediate assent to the address so ably opened by his noble friend. He nevertheless found it necessary for him to make a few observations upon the subject, to avoid cavils hereafter by stating the conditions on which he gave his consent, in order to have it understood that he did not pledge himself against future objections, and that it might not be pleaded in bar against the most severe investigation of the conduct of ministers, who had reduced the country to its present deplorable situation, a motion which he should bring forward at the earliest opportunity. For the present he would endeavour to take up as a small portion of their lordships' time as the nature of his observations would permit. The noble earl who seconded the motion for the address, had very justly observed, that the grand and leading feature of the Speech was "the assurance of his Majesty that he would immediately send a person to Paris with full powers to treat, and that it is his Majesty's anxious wish that the measure may lead to the restoration of a general peace;" this, the earl said, he was happy to find was considered by the noble seconder of the motion for an address as the leading feature. It was the same in his estimation, and, he believed, of every well wisher to his country in the kingdom. He had been, the earl said, of that opinion from the earliest commencement of the present lamentable contest; and he could not but remark that if a safe, honourable, and permanent peace could now be obtained, he should sit down well satisfied with all the obloquy and abuse which had been so plentifully heaped upon himself and those with whom he had the honour to act for the last three years, and which thus in our day had been effectually done away. The earl then adverted to what had been said by the noble mover of the address in praise of the enterprising achievements of the Archduke Charles, and said that no man of the smallest degree of candour or liberality who had read of them, but would go with pleasure to the utmost extent of the praise which his noble friend had bestowed. They were noble and splendid in the extreme, and he firmly believed they

they had been the means of saving the house of Austria, and the whole Germanic body from a state of the greatest humiliation. He hoped also, as the noble earl who seconded the address, had said, that they would be of great utility and importance to the interests of this kingdom. It depended altogether on the use that should be made of them. If these fortunate achievements should operate, as he hoped they would do, to procure moderation in our part and to induce us to hold a temperate and rational negotiation, they ought to be considered as omens of great happiness to us, and our ally; if, on the contrary, they should have the fatal tendency of reviving the inauspicious hopes formerly entertained and cause the parties to rise in their demands, so as to be the means of prolonging this miserable and unavailing struggle; then they would and ought to be looked upon as the severest curse that could befall the country; and he was afraid they would be felt as such, not only by the people of the present day, but by their posterity for a length of time to come. The earl said, there was one part of what was contained in the address as well as in the speech of the noble mover, which he could not suffer to pass without making a comment, it was this, "That the internal tranquillity of the kingdom had remained undisturbed, and the endeavours of persons to introduce anarchy had been repressed by the wisdom and energy of the laws." It was very true, the earl said, that the tranquillity of the kingdom had remained undisturbed; and it was with the greatest pleasure he could give his testimony of this truth. He believed also, that this had been owing to the love and reverence the people entertain for the wisdom and energy of the laws of England; but if, by "the wisdom and energy of the laws," any allusion was intended to be made to two extraordinary bills which had been passed in last session of the last parliament, he believed the allusion would be found to be false; neither was it a tranquillity in his opinion at all to be desired, at least no wise man would place any confidence on it. Those Bills were abhorred by the people, who nevertheless held in the highest respect the wisdom and energy of the known constitutional common law of the land. It was certainly more natural to suppose the speech meant the energy of the laws of England generally, and he was willing to take the expression in that sense. The earl repeated, that conceiving peace to be the greatest blessing this country could at present possess, he had readily and cordially come forward in support of the address; but he begged their lordships would understand, that by so doing he did not mean to preclude himself from the right he
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had to enquire, at any future period, into the causes which had been the original occasion of the present calamitous contest, and the conduct of those who had been the means of plunging us into it. These were subjects of the first magnitude, and would hereafter demand the strictest and most minute investigation: having thus made these observations and reservations, he would not longer trespass on the time of the House, but immediately conclude by giving his hearty concurrence to the motion for the address.

Lord Grenville said, from what had passed he found no occasion to detain the House long, because where there was likely to be a pretty general concurrence of opinion, it would be unnecessary to trespass on their lordships time, to enter into debate or to provoke discussion. If however the address had been objected to ever so violently, if it had been made the subject of the most keen, obstinate and persevering debate that ever had taken place within those walls; and that debate had been continued to the latest hour, sure he was, that their lordships would have expected to have heard something from him upon the very able and excellent manner in which the address had been opened. Conscious, that it was not in his power to add any thing to the energy of the argument, or increase the impression it had made on the House, he could not but take that opportunity of declaring the satisfaction he had felt at finding that the noble earl had at length brought into publick those talents, which he had long known him to possess. Nor let it be imagined that the warmth with which he spoke in praise of one of the most forcible and at the same time the most elegant speeches, he had ever heard in either House of parliament, was imputable solely to the impulse of private friendship, high as that stood; he was impelled to do his noble friend justice on a still better principle; he rejoiced as a publick man at so splendid an exhibition of talents, which ought, and he hoped would be frequently brought into publick use. Such abilities might be deemed a valuable national advantage, and therefore were fairly intitled to become the subject of publick exultation. Having said this, though he meant not to enter into debate at any length, he must be allowed to take notice of one or two points that had been alluded to by the noble earl who had first delivered his sentiments, and the noble earl who had spoken last. He was glad to find the latter did not mean to object to the address, or to enter any discussion of the cause and conduct of the war at that time; in answer however to his desire, to have the conditions on which he did so perfectly understood;

he must say that a conditional agreement was a bargain which he was not desirous of making with any man, nor indeed did he see how it was possible upon publick grounds. Every man was at liberty to indulge his opinion, as he was responsible to himself for his conduct in parliament, and it was natural to suppose that he would govern that conduct at his own judgment, influenced by times and circumstances should point out to him to be for the best. He never would be the man to consider an assent to an address as a pledge for future conduct or plead it in bar to any objections that either the noble earl or any other peer of parliament, should think it necessary to state in regard to the measures of administration. One expression had fallen from the noble earl of which he could not but take some notice; the noble earl had talked of the advantages of putting an end to this "miserable and unavailing struggle." So far from that being the true description of the war, he would ever maintain that the struggle had not been an unavailing one. It had availed us most materially at its commencement, it had continued so to avail us during the progress of the war, and at this very moment we were availing ourselves of the serious and solid advantages it afforded. Nor were those advantages engrossed by this country alone, all Europe had participated in them; neither was the noble earl's declaration that the proposition of his Majesty to send a person immediately to Paris with full powers to treat for a general peace to be considered as an answer to all the obloquy and calumny which the noble earl had been pleased to say, had been cast on him, and those with whom he acted, for having made the same proposition three years since, nor was it a proof of any inconsistency in his Majesty's ministers who maintained the same principles and opinions at that moment that they had ever done, for surely there was no inconsistency in adopting that measure at one time on the grounds of expediency, which at another time and under different circumstances they might deem highly inexpedient.

The whole of the argument of the noble earl, who had spoken first, and had moved an amendment to the address appeared to him to be wholly founded on a mistake and to be built on a supposition, that to treat for peace with the Republic of France, implied a dereliction of the principles on which the war had commenced, and that government had pledged itself to make peace with France on no terms but that of restoring hereditary monarchy to that country. Ministers however had never acted in so wild and extravagant a manner as to pledge themselves to any such principle;

on the contrary they had found themselves repeatedly called upon for the three last years to repel the calumny that they deemed a republican form of government, a bar to negotiation. It was true that they had originally thought that an hereditary monarchy was the form of government best calculated to secure the happiness of France and the safety of Europe; they thought so still, and he for one should ever continue to think so, but it by no means followed as a fair and warrantable conclusion, that therefore this country, could never treat with safety with any form of government in France, but an hereditary monarchy. Another mistake into which the noble earl had fallen was in supposing that his majesty's ministers were prepared to treat for peace on the worst possible terms with France, and on terms the most unfavourable to this country; whereas ministers entertained no such ideas, and if they had been weak enough to do so, he was persuaded that neither the parliament nor the people would suffer them to act upon conditions so unnecessarily disgraceful to the national honour. The noble earl had put a variety of questions to him, to answer which was wholly unnecessary and would be extremely improper and unbecoming, but when the noble earl asked, were they prepared to receive French agents into every part of the country to propagate their pernicious principles of anarchy and disorganization? He had not the smallest hesitation to answer, no. This country would never submit to suffer an enemy nor indeed any foreign power to dictate internal regulations tending to the subversion of the government and the overthrow of the constitution; upon what grounds the noble earl had entertained any such idea, he owned, he was utterly incapable to imagine. The noble earl had asked, what security we could have against an interference similar to that which had been practised in Sardinia? The noble earl, however, ought to have considered that the king of Sardinia was compelled to accept unworthy terms of peace; and the same motives which induced him to submit to the condition might render it necessary to perform it. The difference of our situation, by exempting us from the necessity of the one, secured us from the ignominy of the other. The noble earl had also asked, were they prepared to abandon their allies? fairly observing at the same time, that the prowess and firmness of the Emperor and the brilliant victories obtained for him by that gallant prince his brother, the Archduke, bound us still more closely to his cause, and if we were to desert him, the consequence would be shame, dishonour, and disgrace upon the British character. He admitted in the fullest extent the

truth of the noble earl's observation, and surely if the uniform conduct of this country towards her allies in times and under circumstances of the greatest difficulty and embarrassment, did not sufficiently shew that there could be no reason to entertain an idea at once contradictory to the national justice and generosity, and contrary to all experience, the observation of the noble earl, would prove that it would be impossible that this country should make so ungrateful a return to the Emperor for the advantages, which Great Britain in common with all Europe had derived from his undaunted spirit and the bravery of his troops. At length, after a great variety of most extraordinary questions; the noble earl came to one, which, the noble earl told their lordships, he might safely to put to ministers and which he had a right to call upon them to answer, and that was, with whom they were about to treat? Was it with France as it stood at this time, or as stood under the hereditary monarchy? And the noble earl had followed up this question by observations and interrogatories about Spain, Italy and Prussia, and the situation of the West India islands. The successes of our arms in the last mentioned quarter of the globe surely afforded us reasonable grounds of satisfaction. Whether he approved of the conduct of France with respect to Spain or Prussia, or the conduct of those courts towards the republic of France, it was not at all necessary for him at that moment to explain. The only answer he should give to the noble earl's question was, that he saw nothing in the state of the manufactures, commerce, general prosperity and resources of the country that ought to induce us to accept of any other terms of peace than such as were likely to be equally just, honourable, and permanent. If just and honourable conditions were refused by the enemy, we were prepared to resist any disgraceful demands; and the power of supporting this determination was perhaps the best mode of obtaining fair and honourable terms. He should forbear saying any thing more. He was convinced that there could exist no other wish than to shew to the enemy that we still possessed the same spirit as at first to repel their arrogance and haughty pretensions should they persist in them.

With regard to the official paper produced by the noble earl and alluded to by him, he considered it as a false and senseless libel on the people of this country beneath the notice of parliament, nor could he by any means think, that such a publication ought to obstruct the progress of a negotiation which might terminate in conditions of peace, such

as it might be consistent with the dignity and honour of this country to accede to.

The earl of *Abingdon* said, he for one could not agree to the address, and was rather inclined to go with the noble earl, who had moved the amendment. He declared for his own part, he would not consent to a peace on any other condition than that of the *status quo ante bellum*: a different sort of treaty might be *ça ira* to some people, but to him *cela n'ira pas*. With respect to the bills passed last year against treason and sedition, and to which a part of his Majesty's speech appeared to allude, he considered them as infringements on the English constitution. There were certain rights inherent in the people of this country, which neither king, lords, nor commons gave, nor was it in their power to take them away. He referred their lordships to the principles and practice of Westminster-hall, and quoted Blackstone's opinion, declaring that he was prepared to go more fully into the subject, but that he would not then detain their lordships, he would barely content himself with seconding the amendment.

Lord *Hay* (earl of *Kinnoul*) said, he did not mean to prolong the debate, or enter into any discussion of the speech from the throne, or the address that had been moved. Almost all the topics contained in the one, and adverted to in the other, had been most ably spoken to by the noble earls who moved and seconded the address. He rose only to say a word or two to two observations made by the noble earl who declined opposing the address (lord Guildford), and which points had not been noticed by the noble secretary of state. The noble earl had talked of the reduced situation of the country,—so far from this being the fact, he was convinced that this country had great resources, and that her resources were daily increasing and extending, so as to be fully equal to any exertion that this country might find it necessary to make, in case the directory of France should receive the offers of his Majesty's ministers with haughtiness and insult, or should insist on terms, that it would be neither honourable, nor safe for this country to accede to. The other point to which he wished to call their lordships' attention, for a single moment, was, with respect to what the said noble earl had said in reference to the two bills against treason and sedition, that had passed early in the last session; those bills he verily believed, had not only conduced to the maintenance of the internal peace and tranquillity of the kingdom, but had actually proved the preservation of the constitution. When-
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ever the noble earl thought proper to bring the principles of those bills under discussion, he would be ready to meet him, and to shew that they were wise and necessary; and when that day should come, he would rest their defence on the argument used by Blackstone, in his Commentaries in defence of the *Habeas Corpus* act, "it is always worth while to give up a part of the publick freedom to preserve the rest." His lordship concluded with declaring that the address had his most hearty concurrence, and he trusted the general and almost unanimous support it was likely to meet with from their lordships, would have the most salutary effect.

The earl of *Abingdon* rose to deny that Blackstone was a constitutional lawyer. He was, (the earl said) very much the contrary, and the excellence of his book had done more harm, than almost any other publication, by the general dissemination of the doctrines it held out. He had consulted another authority, which he would oppose to Blackstone, and that was Mr. Locke. His lordship said a few words more on the two bills, and the rights of the subject, and declared, that if the noble earl who moved the amendment, would take the sense of the house, he would divide with him if they stood alone.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* justified his former speech by declaring, that be the effect of his sentiments what they might, he thought it his duty to submit the topicks he had alluded to, as considerations well worthy the serious attention of his Majesty's ministers and their lordships. With regard to his Majesty's ministers not being pledged to the principles of restoring hereditary monarchy to France, previous to their treating for peace, if his recollection did not deceive him, they had so pledged themselves in a manifesto, published not before, but soon after the commencement of the war. But what was a still stronger pledge than any that could be given in a manifesto, was the circumstance of their having held out an invitation to all Frenchmen, desirous of restoring the ancient hereditary monarchy of France, to take up arms in that cause, at the same time promising them their support. If after such an invitation they deserted those, who had acted in confidence of their good faith, what could excuse the disgrace of such conduct?

Lord *Grenville* in reply said, it was an unpleasant thing to say, that he entertained considerable doubts of the correctness of the noble earl's recollection, but he certainly did not believe that the manifesto in question contained any such pledge. He repeated that it had ever been, and still was the opinion of his Majesty's ministers, that the restoration of
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hereditary monarchy would be most likely to afford tranquillity and happiness to France, and safety and security to all Europe, but they had not pledged themselves never to make peace with France while under any other form of government.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* maintained his premises, and said that though he never had asserted that ministers made the restoration of hereditary monarchy in France the sole ground of peace, he thought that while they encouraged and embodied those, from whose efforts the restoration of monarchy was to be expected, they in fact warranted the conclusion, that it was their wish, intention and object.

Lord *Grenville* said he was extremely sorry to be obliged to trouble their lordships again; it was in vain to repeat explanations of what he had fully explained before; if the noble earl would have the goodness to refer to the manifesto in question, he believed he would find in it a satisfactory answer to his argument, on both points.

The earl of *Abingdon* called upon ministers to know what they meant by the hereditary monarchy of France? He had a right, he said, to put interrogatories to them, and to call for an explanation. Did they mean the old tyranny of France, which had caused all the mischiefs they had lately witnessed, and all the bloodshed that was now flowing before heaven and earth? The restoration of that tyranny would be more injurious to this country, and to the general interests of Europe, than any event that could happen.

No answer being given, the lord Chancellor read the address down to the words, "most dear to us," and then put the question on the amendment moved to be inserted by earl *Fitzwilliam*, on which the *Not Contents* had it. His lordship then read the remainder of the address, and it being agreed to *nemine dissente*, the house adjourned to the next day.

The house adjourned to next day.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, October 6.

The speaker took the chair at two o'clock, and several members took the oaths.

About a quarter after three the House was summoned to the bar of the House of Peers, to hear the speech delivered from the throne, by his Majesty. The speaker attended by many members proceeded to the House of Peers accordingly, and returned in about half an hour.

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The speaker then read all the standing orders, which were severally put to the question, and agreed to by the house.

After which he gave notice, *pro forma*, that the clerk, according to custom, had prepared a bill for the better preventing clandestine outlawries. The title was read, and the bill having been ordered to be read a second time, the session was considered as opened, and the speaker stated that he had been in the House of Peers, where his Majesty delivered a most gracious speech from the throne, of which to prevent mistakes, he had procured a copy, which he read from the chair.

Lord *Morpeth* (son to the earl of *Carlisle*) immediately rose to move the address. He declared, that he felt himself somewhat emboldened, from the consideration of the contents of the speech they had just heard, and which, he flattered himself, would meet the cordial approbation of the house. He considered it more peculiarly incumbent upon those who had the honour of a seat in that house, to come forward, as early as possible, to give their opinion upon public affairs. Under this impression he stood forward. He trusted that the sentiments avowed in his Majesty's speech, would tend to reconcile that variety and opposition of opinions which had hitherto subsisted; for, whatever sentiments gentlemen might have entertained with respect to the origin of the war, and the cause of aggression which occasioned it, it must assuredly give them satisfaction to concur in a motion which had for its object the expediting of an honourable peace. Those gentlemen who thought, that this was a war of unjust aggression on the part of the enemy, would be happy to find, that the present government of France possessed a stability and permanence, enabling it to enter into and maintain the relations of peace and amity with other powers; as well as that they seemed disposed to listen to negotiation, and that a passport from that government had accordingly arrived here. Flattering however, as was our prospect, and sanguine as were our expectations of the favourable issue of such a negotiation, he trusted we should not neglect to adopt such active and energetic measures as would tend to facilitate our obtaining that object which was so much desired, and, in particular, that we should so employ our forces, and put this country in such a posture of defence, as would best manifest to the enemy our ability to maintain the contest, should this negotiation eventually fail; should it prove successful, we should have the satisfaction of having placed the country in such a state as to contribute to its security. His lordship proceeded to notice the flourishing state of our fleets and commerce.

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He exulted with satisfaction, while he remarked, that though in a state of war, our exports were about two millions more the last half year, than in the corresponding period of the former year and nearly as much as in the most prosperous year of peace. He said it was impossible to look on this flourishing state of our commerce without the most heartfelt satisfaction. Our resources, it was evident were not exhausted, and the country was far from being in that impoverished state which had been represented. It fully appeared that whatever might be the issue of any negotiation entered into with France, this country still maintained an ability, if necessary, to continue the contest; that it would be able to surmount those difficulties incident to war, and retain its former respectable rank among the powers of Europe.

His lordship observed, that our dominion at sea, to which we were greatly indebted for our peace and security, remained unimpaired. Our arms both in the East and West Indies had also proved successful. And if we looked to our allies, though we felt alarm at first, when they seemed to be overpowered by their enemies, we were now called to admire the bravery of the Austrians, which, he trusted, had defeated the gigantic projects of the French. With regard to our situation with Spain, he would say little, as negotiations were now carrying on with that country; he would, therefore, only observe, that if the issue of the negotiation should prove unfavourable, he hoped it would hereafter appear that the government of this country had not idly hazarded a rupture with another power.

He trusted that when the auspicious situation of this country, and the favourable prospect it was warranted to entertain, were considered, that the House would feel itself powerfully induced to assure his Majesty to support the honour and interest of the Crown, and to second such measures as might tend to accelerate a lasting and an honourable peace. His lordship concluded with moving an address of thanks to his Majesty, which, as usual in such cases, was an echo to the speech.

Sir *W. Lowther* seconded the motion, and observed, that as the persons who now exercise the power of government in France were such as, in the opinion of his Majesty's ministers might be safely treated with, it was wise to open a negotiation for peace. He had no doubt that ministers were sincere in the object they professed, and he trusted that no difficulty would be thrown in the way of the intended negotiation.

He agreed with the noble lord who preceded him in the statement he had given of our finances, and he trusted that his Majesty would be enabled to obtain an honourable peace.

As soon as the speaker had read the motion,

Mr. *Fox* rose, and spoke to the following effect :—It is not for, my intention to take up much of your time in what I have to offer to the house on the present occasion; but if I were to give a silent vote upon the motion which has just been made, I apprehend that my conduct might be subject to misconstruction. I know that it may undoubtedly be considered as presumption in an individual to take up any portion of the attention of the house, merely to obviate the possibility of misinterpretation, yet I feel that I should not do justice to my own principles, if I were to suffer the question to pass under a silent vote. In the first place, then, the striking feature of the speech is—that his Majesty has been at length advised to do what it has fallen to my lot to advise his Majesty's ministers to do repeatedly for the last three years, namely, to open a negotiation; this, which is the leading feature of the speech, ought undoubtedly to reconcile me to the address which has been moved, and I should be happy if it contained no other features of a less pleasing aspect, and that I could have given my entire approbation to every part of the address. Of that striking feature I most cordially and highly approve. I cannot forget, how often I have advised this measure, nor how often without success I have pressed it upon ministers, but however I may lament that, the counsel was not taken before a hundred millions of money was spent, and thousands of lives devoted to the cruel contest, yet it must draw from me my warm approbation now that it hath been followed. He who thought that the war was originally unnecessary, and that every moment since its commencement as a proper moment for beginning a negotiation for peace, cannot object to the measure which his Majesty has announced, that he has been advised to take in the present moment. I will not say one word about the particular and the fit time for such a measure, all times appearing to me to be equally wise and salutary for endeavouring to restore to the people the blessings of peace. Nor will I recollect, much less retaliate, the personal invectives that were thrown out against myself; that an attempt to negotiate with such a people, was to lay his Majesty's crown at their feet, and that it was a degradation of the honour and dignity of Great Britain—that to propose

to open a negotiation was in fact to sue for peace, and that such conduct was neither dignified nor political. Such was the language of the last parliament, and such was the animadversion made on the advice which I then gave. I will content myself with repeating what I then said, that, "to propose negotiation is not to sue for peace." It is at every moment dignified and proper to strive to restore the blessings of peace, and it is certainly one thing to propose a negotiation in which terms are to be fairly and manfully discussed, and another to sue to your enemy for peace. He who objects to this distinction is not animated by that feeling which ought ever to be uppermost in the mind of a statesman—with the desire of shortening the calamity of war, and paving the way, by every practicable means, to that desirable end. He ought ever, therefore, to make manifest in his conduct, that no career of conquest and no reverse of fortune, can divert him from that single object—a negotiation for peace in preference to any other object. I repeat, therefore, that I most perfectly and entirely approve of the present measure, and will not now mix my assent to that part of the address, with any observation on the tardy and protracted manner in which it has at length been resolved upon. And thus approving of the principal feature of the address, I am extremely unwilling to oppose any other part of it, and wish that it had been so worded as to have entitled it to the perfect unanimity of the whole house. There are some expressions, however, of which I must take notice, and I shall do so rather with the intention of explaining the vote which I shall give, than of moving any thing upon them. And first, in the very opening of the speech there is an expression that his Majesty has *used every endeavour* to open a negotiation; now, unless by the words *every endeavour* it is meant to say that every endeavour has been used *since* the close of the last parliament, we ought not to agree to the expression, for undoubtedly ministers cannot expect that gentlemen, who like myself, objected so frequently to their refusal to exert any effort at all, should now acquiesce in an assertion that they had used every endeavour to bring about a negotiation. Unless, therefore, it is meant to allude to the endeavours which his Majesty has made since the close of the last parliament, endeavours which I am willing to take upon trust, I desire that it may be clearly understood that I am not to be precluded by my vote this night from animadverting upon his Majesty's ministers for their former want of endeavours to bring about a negotiation for

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peace. There is much that deserves praise in the construction of the present speech. Ministers have omitted the words to which they have been so bigotted heretofore, of the war having been undertaken for the cause of *religion, humanity and social order*, words calculated only to inflame and to exasperate the two nations against each other, and to set the probability of peace at a greater distance; neither have they asserted their constant and unfounded phrase, that the *war was just and necessary*. They have acted wisely in thus abstaining from intemperate language, for surely at a time when they are about to negotiate for a peace, it would have been peculiarly ill-judged and unseasonable to have made use of language repulsive and bitter to the people with whom you had to treat; nor would it have been wise to introduce words calculated to prevent unanimity in this house, upon the course which his Majesty has been slowly advised to pursue; since with respect to the necessity of the war, and all the jargon of epithets that have been applied to it, there must always continue to be a fundamental difference of opinion. Other parts of the speech perhaps demand a little explanation, and which if we pass over for the time, it is to be understood that we are left at full liberty to enquire and to question the assertions hereafter; such is the declaration of the *flourishing state of our manufactures, trade, and commerce*. I must take this upon trust; I cannot object to the assertion of a fact, the proofs of which I have not before me. We shall soon have the means of knowing, upon better authority than mere assertion, the state of the country; and I trust it will turn out to be prosperous and flourishing. Our agreeing to the assertion in the mean time, must not be construed as precluding us from enquiry, much less to involve our assent. When I hear it said, that by the flourishing state of our manufactures, trade, and commerce, our *resources are ample and sufficient for the crisis* in which we are involved, I must hesitate in giving credit to an assertion which is so little supported by the public appearance of things. I must think when I look at the price of the general funds of the country, the state of the transferable securities of government, the monstrous discounts upon the enormous quantity of paper which they have issued, together with the daily conferences of which we hear for schemes to relieve the pecuniary embarrassments of trade, I must be led to think that our resources are in a less favourable state than his Majesty's ministers have chosen to make us believe they are; and when
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the question comes hereafter fairly before us, then, and not now, will be the proper moment for ascertaining the truth of this important fact, and of making the proper declaration thereon. There is one other part of the address, I believe it is nearly, if not the concluding sentence, upon which I cannot forbear to make some observations; it is that part of the address in which we are made *to rejoice in the general tranquillity of the country*, a sentiment in which I heartily concur, for tranquillity at all times is a most desirable thing; but when we proceed farther and hear this tranquillity ascribed to the wisdom and energy of the laws, insinuating that the laws which were passed in the last session of the last parliament, have secured to us this tranquillity and triumphed over anarchy and confusion, I must enter my solemn protest against the whole of this assertion, and against all such assertions. I have never been convinced that there were any such persons in this country, or at least that there were any number of persons in this country desirous of anarchy and confusion, worthy of the attention of his Majesty, or of this house; I therefore must solemnly protest against the insinuation, that it is to the energy of those laws that we are indebted for the general tranquillity that is said to have reigned; general tranquillity arising out of the obedience which a rational people cheerfully pay to good laws, must always be a subject of real rejoicing; but, if it is meant to be said, that general tranquillity has sprung out of the two laws of the last session of the last parliament—laws which ought to be the object of our terror and abhorrence, and which are calculated to excite these feelings, I cannot rejoice in any such tranquillity. Should I be asked, have these laws produced tranquillity? I answer, no: it is not in the nature of such laws to produce tranquillity. Such laws may produce a forced quiet, which I consider as a real alarm. Do we rejoice in such a tranquillity, where discussion is to be stifled and men are to brood in secret over the grievances which they feel?—no: such a tranquillity alarms me more than tumult. It is a tranquillity which every man who loves freedom ought to see with pain—every man who loves order ought to see with terror. Sir, to the constitution no man can feel a stronger attachment than myself; but I will not sport with the word constitution; I will not use the word without explaining it; my attachment is to the constitution under which I was born, under which I was bred, not to that of the last parliament, which did more to maim and disfigure the ancient constitution of England than

than any former parliament that ever sat within these walls. Let me, then, sir, be clearly understood, that I do not join in this insinuation of praise upon these abominable laws, nor ascribe to them effects to which I believe them to be inapplicable. Much as I wish for a general approbation of the measure of endeavouring to procure peace to this country, yet, sir, I should think it was purchased at too dear a rate, if coupled with the approbation of these abhorrent laws; and I have thought it my duty to say so much, that my vote may not be misinterpreted into an acquiescence of this part of the address.

I am one of those who think that the whole system of our foreign politics, on which this war was undertaken, has been faulty: I think also, that springing from the same source, our whole system of domestic policy has been equally faulty. They have run on together in a parallel progress, and have produced all the varied calamities which the people have been doomed to suffer. I think, therefore, that whatever may be the result of the negotiation which his Majesty has been at length advised to open, whether it shall produce, as I hope it will, the blessing of a speedy and a permanent peace, or that its object shall be frustrated, and that we shall be doomed to the continuance of war, still it will be the duty of this house seriously to re-consider the system which has produced these evils, and to devise the means of preventing such evils in future. Peace, I own, to be our great object, the first, the chief thing to be pursued, and, if possible, to be obtained: but whether peace itself, without such a review and such a change of system as may protect us in future from such calamities, can restore us to our former condition, may be a matter of doubt. Peace would certainly be beneficial, even accompanied by the bad system that has lately been introduced. Peace might enable the people a little longer to endure the evils with which that system is fraught; it might render it a little less pernicious on account of the advantages which would flow from the revival of industry and trade; and therefore, at all events, let us have peace! peace at all events! but let it be thoroughly understood, that in the one case it would only be a palliative, in the other it would be a remedy. Peace certainly is the chief object: it is preferable to any single object of policy; but whether peace will be effectual, if there be no change in domestic politics, may be a matter of doubt. Peace, therefore shall have my cordial support, and every measure like the present, that
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leads to the desirable event, or that makes an opening towards it, ought to be received with unanimity by all descriptions of men.

The noble lord who moved the address to his Majesty in a manner so highly to his credit, and who, I am sure, will believe me when I say, that I sincerely rejoice in the display of talents which he has made to-night, as he knows that I have many reasons for rejoicing in his success (and I certainly never heard an address moved with more propriety and taste), has made use of one expression which went a little further, and is a little fuller than the speech itself. Speaking of the negotiation being opened, he said that "the present government of France, possessing stability and permanence, was a government with which we might safely and politically treat." This is a proposition which I will not now investigate; I who always thought them a government with which we ought to treat; but I cordially approve of this expression of the noble lord, and wish the speech had been equally explicit; for I am of opinion that wherever you have to negotiate with any persons, it is sound policy to treat them with respect. The expression of the noble lord is therefore deserving of approbation: good sense produced in the noble lord what in my opinion ought also to have struck his Majesty's ministers, and what I should have rejoiced to have seen in the speech and in the address, namely, that it was wise and seasonable to speak of the government with which we had to treat, in terms of respect and civility. After all the difficulties and jealousies which we have had to deplore, it would surely have been wise in a speech to be delivered from the throne, that his Majesty's ministers should have named the persons at least to whom they were to send, and the country with which we are at war. In former times, if they had had occasion to send a minister to the Hague, they would have addressed themselves "to the States General of the United Provinces," and on the present occasion the same policy demands that they should have addressed themselves "to the Executive Directory of the French Republic." I think I observe a smile upon this remark, but why it is made I profess I know not. Are the French Directory in such a state of obscurity as not to be worthy of name? We are about to send a person to this Executive Directory, and it certainly is not very political to do it in an ungracious manner. Perhaps the omission may be the effect of mere inadvertency, and that I may be more struck with

it on account of the contrast of the noble lord's speech. Perhaps I may be told that I am tenacious of an opinion that I before held with respect to America: having thought that the gratuitous recognition of their independence was a wise and political measure, and would have greatly contributed to shorten the calamity of war, I am still wedded to that opinion, and because I saw advantages in this course which greatly overbalanced those who thought it prudent to make a bargain of our recognition, I still hold the same doctrine with respect to the French republic. I certainly shall have no objection to incur this charge. I do think it wise and political to acknowledge them at once by the title which they give themselves; I think it agreeable to the practice of common life, and recommended by the prudence of all intercourse in private society. We know that in private communication, in disputes between man and man, there are points which cannot be insisted upon by the persons themselves, which at the same time others will not be disposed to dispute. It is certainly not political to hurt the pride of those with whom we have any point to settle; if we have any business to transact with a person in private life, it would hardly be thought consistent with decency and good manners, much less with policy and good sense, to deny him any title which he may happen to bear, or to which he may think he has a claim. If the omission was the effect of mere inadvertency, I hope that pains will be taken to prevent all misunderstanding in the outset, and that we shall not have to regret our inattention and disregard of little trifling points of etiquette, when we have so important an object as peace depending upon the issue of our conduct. I hope, and I trust that this house hopes, I know that the country hopes, that this negotiation may be successful. But sir, if it should not, much will be gained, if it should be proved to the people of this country, that nothing but the extravagance of terms had frustrated our endeavours to procure the desirable end; much would be gained if it should be proved that no obstacle to peace had been thrown in the way, by our desire of restoring the ancient system of government in France, or by our neglecting to make our dispositions in this respect sufficiently manifest. The jealousy of the French republick is sufficiently visible. It would have removed all jealousy and stifled every suspicion if the Executive Directory had been addressed by name, and we had thereby made a decisive publick declaration, that whatever might be its form of government, whether

ther a monarchy or a republick, we were desirous of negotiating for a peace with France. This, sir, would have reconciled me more cordially to the form of proceeding which his Majesty's ministers have now adopted, and would have given me infinitely more confidence in its success. I shall not, however, object to the clause by any amendment, because, if omitted by accident, I will not thwart the prosecution of the main object by my remark; they might refuse my amendment though convinced of their own error, from an unwillingness to be so corrected; and this is not the moment in which I shall endeavour to throw any thing that may be construed into a check upon their conduct: I wish to leave them in possession of full powers; of as full powers as any ministers ought to be intrusted with, in order that they may carry on the negociation unshackled and unrestrained. For this reason, sir, I repeat it, I shall propose no amendment, though I have thought it necessary to state my opinion on this part of the speech.

As to the misunderstanding between this country and Spain, I shall say nothing; there is no information on this subject before us. Ministers say that their conduct has been moderate and forbearing. I hope it has been so, I hope that they have learnt by the severe lessons of adversity which we have recently been taught, that moderation and forbearance are not only consistent with true interest, but also with true magnanimity. I was sanguine enough to hope that the lesson which we learnt from America, would have been sufficient to convince us of this important truth, and that we should not have had occasion to have gone to the school of adversity again to confirm us in it. His majesty's ministers, however, unfortunately for England and for humanity, did not think in the same manner; at length, I hope they have learnt not merely that moderation and forbearance are the most magnanimous, but also the most prudent principle of conduct; and that not merely no perfect security, but no real grandeur, can be maintained without a steadfast adherence to them. Of Spain therefore and of the question at issue with that court, I shall not say one word; the materials for a perfect judgment are not before us. One thing, however, I cannot omit, because it is seasonable and instructive; it ought to convince us how short sighted is human policy. We cannot have forgot the stress that was laid upon the advantageous crisis, and the favourable circumstance under which we engaged in this war. "With all Europe for your allies, and particularly with

Spain and Prussia by your side, you are to encounter France left without a friend." Such was the lofty and high-sounding invitation that was held out to engage you to plunge into the war. Now you are told from the throne that you have a misunderstanding with the court of Spain, and as to Prussia not a word is said of Prussia, but I apprehend that no very sanguine hopes are entertained of assistance from that quarter; so much for the sagacity that led us into the crusade! Wisdom, and experience they say, cannot be purchased too dear, it would not be denied that we have paid a tolerable price, but having paid the price, let us at least have the benefit of the wisdom and experience we have purchased, and practice the virtues of moderation and forbearance of which we have so slowly and so feelingly learnt the value.

As to the terms of peace, the present is not the moment for saying one word upon the subject. I have no difficulty in asserting that there are still great resources in this country, even in its present state, if the people were fairly and fully convinced that the blessings of peace were refused through the perverseness or the ambition of France. I should have no hesitation in saying that if, after manifesting a disposition of candour, simplicity, and openness, in negotiating the terms of a peace, it should still appear that they refuse to accede to a just and reasonable peace, we not only should find ample resources in this country for prosecuting the war with vigour, but we should prosecute it with such an unanimity of heart as would draw forth all the energy and all the vigour of the nation. I say thus much in the contemplation of a clear, candid, and manly procedure on the part of our ministers, and I have no doubt but I shall be cordially joined by every part of the country in this declaration, that if they do so conduct themselves, they will meet with universal support. But on the other side we ought to negotiate in the spirit of great moderation. I have no difficulty in saying, for one, that I should find much less fault if the terms of peace faulty on the side of moderation, than I should be inclined to do if faulty in the contrary extreme. To ignominious terms of peace I know and believe that this country would never be made to submit. But I wish it clearly to be understood, that, rather than supporting any ministers in extravagant pretensions, arising either from the pride of transient fortune or from natural arrogance, I would be much more disposed to give my assent to terms that, on a due investigation of our claims, might be considered as rather below than above our right. I have no difficulty in saying,
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In case of such a balance, on which side I think the scale ought to turn; but I do not think that the present is the fit moment to enter into the discussion of terms at all; for, in my mind, the whole of this ought to be left to ministers, as not our interest only, but also the relative interest of the different powers are to be affected by the negotiation.

With regard to the Austrian victories which make a topic of animated exultation in his majesty's speech, it may certainly be right to rejoice in the gallantry they have displayed, and the laurels they have recently acquired. No man admires their great military exertions more than I do, but let it be recollected that we are called upon to rejoice on their having recovered only a part of what was lost in this campaign, and that it is not because they have reaped successes, calculated to obtain what ministers themselves originally stated the object of the war to be, but because they have saved the house of Austria from the utter destruction with which it was threatened; while we rejoice I presume we can hardly flatter ourselves that the Austrians are likely to recover all that they have lost in the present campaign, much less what they have lost in all the campaigns that are past; and even this, sir, must furnish a new subject for reflection, which the achievements of our navy still further serve to corroborate: the achievements of that navy have been brilliant and glorious; at no former period have they displayed greater gallantry, and never perhaps equal skill. No eulogiums can be too high for their merits. Yet after all this, the character of the peace which we are desirous to obtain, and the utmost we can expect, is, that it shall be solid and of permanent duration; this, I believe, is as high a character as the peace is likely to deserve. Then what must be the sort of conflict in which we are engaged, in which after a four years successful exertion of all the skill, and all the valour of our navy, in which they have invariably conquered and carried the flag of England triumphant to every quarter of the world; all our efforts cannot produce to us a peace either brilliant or glorious, but we must content ourselves with hoping for a peace that may be solid and permanent? Must we not own that there is something in the cause in which we are engaged radically defective, that palsies our efforts, and disappoints our strength? that there is something which demands from the common sense and from the prudence of Englishmen, a strict and a rigorous investigation, that we may discover what this something is, not merely to retrieve the present calamity, but guard our offspring

against the error in future ? A day will come for such a question ; and I shall give my assent to the present address without moving any amendments upon the points of which I do not cordially approve, because when the day of such a discussion does come, I shall have an opportunity to make the observations that I think it important for the House to entertain upon those points. No great distance of time shall elapse before I shall think it my duty to bring the matter before you, since I think it of the most essential importance to the well being of the country, and to the true support and dignity of his Majesty's crown, that an enquiry into all the causes which have brought the nation into its present condition, and produced the calamities of the present war, should be instituted for the purpose of advising his Majesty to make a fundamental change in the system upon which we have lately acted, both with regard to foreign and domestic policy. When this day shall come, and that I shall move the House upon this great and constitutional subject, I should not like to be told that I have precluded myself from the discussion of these topics, and shut myself up from enquiring not merely into the causes, but the conduct of the war, as well as into the nature of our domestic misfortunes, by the assent which I had given to the address of this day. For this reason, sir, I have thought it necessary to say so much, and with this reserve of freedom for a future day of discussion I do not oppose the address to his Majesty upon his speech from the throne.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* spoke to the following effect : Though I feel myself impelled from more than one consideration to come forward on the present occasion, I shall not be under the necessity of troubling the House much at length. It is certainly to me a matter of great satisfaction that at so critical a conjuncture, indeed the most critical and the most important that has occurred during the present century, that on the only great and substantial question on which the address proposes to express any opinion, there should be no difference of sentiment in this House, and that even the right honourable gentleman should have expressed his cordial concurrence. There are certainly many topics on which he touched in the course of the speech in which I now differ with him, as much as ever I differed at any former period, but with respect to the great and substantial object of the address, the propriety of the conduct employed to bring about a solid and durable peace, such a peace as may be consistent with
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the permanent security and the just pretensions of the country, there does not subsist even the slightest shade of difference. That object is found to command the full and most unequivocal support. Such a circumstance I must indeed consider as matter of just pride and of honest satisfaction. It exhibits the most decided and undeniable proof that the steps which his Majesty has taken towards negotiation, that the clear and explicit declaration that he has made, are in themselves so unexceptionable, and so well calculated for the end in view, that they must command assent from any man who retains the smallest care for the interest and honour of his country. Impressed with this feeling of satisfaction, I can have but little inclination to detain the House on points of slighter difference. I look with still higher satisfaction to the concurrence now expressed in that object of the Address, as the pledge of general unanimity, and the omen of great exertions, if unfortunately, that object should not be obtained. The hon. gentleman justly states, that what hitherto has been done only amounts to an overture of peace. It is impossible to state what may be the result. We cannot pronounce what will be the disposition of the enemy, or what circumstances may occur to influence the fate of negotiation. We ought to look fairly to our situation. It holds out to us a chance of peace, if the enemy are disposed to accede to it on just and reasonable terms; but, on the other hand, if they are still actuated by ambitious projects, we shall gain another object by the course we have pursued; we shall unmask them in the eyes of Europe; we shall expose the injustice of their policy and their insatiable thirst of aggrandizement; and if no other advantage be gained, we at least shall be able to put to the proof the sincerity of that pledge which this day has been given; that if the enemy are not disposed to accede to peace on just and reasonable terms, the war will be supported by the unanimous voice and the collected force of the nation. I trust and hope that it may not be necessary to have such a test of sincerity; but while we indulge with satisfaction in the hope of a more favourable issue, we must at the same time look to the other alternative; we must be prepared with all the force of the country to support the prosecution of the contest if its continuance should be found necessary. If the unanimity of this day be accompanied with such views, if it is not an unanimity founded merely upon the pleasing sound of peace, the captivating charm of renewed tranquillity, and the prospect of the termination of those scenes of horror and calamity with which war is always attended

tended (such an unanimity would indeed be fatal to the country), but if it is an unanimity the result of rational and manly reflection, founded upon a careful consideration of the situation of the country, and prepared to meet every conjuncture, it cannot then be too highly prized. We must not put out of view those means of exertion which we still possess, we must fairly compare the situation of this country with that of the enemy, and the amount of our own acquisitions with the losses of our allies; we must estimate the extent of the sacrifices which, under all these circumstances, it may be fitting for us to make, in order to effect the restoration of peace. It is with a view to those principles that unanimity becomes so peculiarly desirable in the present moment: the clear and unequivocal explanation of his conduct, with respect to peace, has commanded a general concurrence. If it be that sentiment which, on the one hand, is prepared to support the just pretensions and reasonable hopes of the country; and on the other to resist the unjustifiable demands and arrogant claims of the enemy, I shall then consider the unanimity of this day as the happiest æra in the history of the country. On this head I shall say no more, and agreeing thus far with the honourable gentleman, I would wish to say as little as possible as to other points on which he touched in the course of his speech, and with respect to which we widely differ. They have been too often and too warmly discussed to be now forgotten by gentlemen who sat in the former Parliament; and in the concluding part of his speech the honourable gentleman gave us an assurance that we should hear of them again. The honourable gentleman had intimated as his opinion, that we must change the whole system of our interior policy, which he considers as inconsistent with the constitution of the country. I am happy, however, to find that he is so far satisfied with the constitution as to ascribe to its protection that internal order and undisturbed tranquillity which he admitted that the country had for some time past enjoyed. He at the same time reprobated in the severest terms laws which were passed during the last parliament, and which he represented as pregnant with the most mischievous consequences, and declared that he could not subscribe to any construction of that part of his Majesty's speech which included those among the laws, the energy and wisdom of which had contributed to secure the tranquillity of the country. Having made this declaration, it would be unfair and uncandid on my part not to be equally explicit. I desire no gentleman
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to vote for the address upon any such qualification with respect to those laws. I am firmly of opinion, that exclusive of their influence, the peace of this country could not have been so successfully maintained, nor can I suffer the smallest reproach to fall upon the character of the last parliament, who displayed their wisdom and their energy in providing a remedy so suitable to the alarming nature of the crisis. If there is any ambiguity in the address, with respect to those laws, it is because they are so consistent with the spirit of the constitution which they were framed to protect, and so blended with the system of our jurisprudence, so congenial to the practice of former times, and so conformable even to the letter of former acts, that it was impossible to make any discrimination. It is to be recollected that they were passed in a moment of alarm and turbulence; they had been found most admirably calculated to meet the emergency of the time. The address does not apportion with minute exactness what degree of tranquillity we have derived from the operation of those laws, when blended with the constitution, and what we might have enjoyed from the influence of laws previously subsisting; how much we were indebted for protection to the antient strength of the edifice, or to those buttresses that were raised to support it in the moment of hurricane. There were some other points on which the honourable gentleman touched. He seemed to consider, from the language of the address, that endeavours have only been made of late to procure peace. He ought to recollect that his Majesty's speech particularly refers to what has taken place since he last communicated with his parliament. If ever the day shall come when an examination shall be instituted into the steps which have been adopted to secure the re-establishment of the general tranquillity, I am confident that no endeavours for that purpose have been wanting on the part of his Majesty's ministers. But gentlemen must be sensible that what may be admitted as an endeavour to restore peace depends upon a variety of circumstances, and is likely to be differently appreciated by individuals of opposite sentiments. It depends on the relative state of parties on the number of allies with whom we may be engaged to act, on the degree of attention we pay to their interests, and on the concert we wish to preserve with them. Taking all these necessary considerations into view, I again pledge myself that it will be found in the result of enquiry that ministers have neglected no opportunity which could have been improved for the purpose

pose of accelerating peace. But the honourable gentleman has told us that we are at last come to the period which he had all along pointed out ; that we have now consented to adopt that course which he has uniformly recommended since the commencement of the contest : to send a person to Paris, and to try the effect of negotiation. He takes to himself all the merit of that policy which we have tardily adopted, and so confident did he feel himself in this ground of self-exultation, that he declined all illustration of his victory, and merely made it the subject of one triumphant observation. His assertion was, " you are now taking those measures which, if you had listened to my councils, you might have adopted four years ago." But does it follow that the measure was right then, because it is right now? May not a period of four years produce events to justify a material change of policy, and to render measures wise and expedient, which at a certain time would neither have been prudent nor reasonable? Because you do not chuse to make peace the day after an unprovoked aggression, may you not be justified in holding out pacific overtures after a lapse of four years? The argument of the honourable gentleman amounts to this, that, either you must make peace the day after the aggression, or not make it at all. With respect to the relative situation of this country and Spain, it would not be consistent with my duty to go into any detail on that subject at the present moment. As to the question of our resources the honourable gentleman admits them to be extensive and flourishing. They furnish, indeed, in a moment like the present, a subject of peculiar congratulation and well grounded confidence. If the revenue, after a four years war, which might have been expected to have injured it so materially in so many branches, and after all the additional burthens which have been imposed, still keeps up to the rate of last year, that circumstance is surely no slight source of satisfaction. With respect to the state of commerce, I am enabled to speak in a very different strain. Notwithstanding all the embarrassments which it has had to encounter, it has attained and still continues to enjoy a pitch of unexampled prosperity. Those embarrassments have proceeded from various causes ; the expence of the war abroad, and the high price of articles of consumption at home ; the situation of part of the Continent, where the markets have been shut against us ; and even the growth of our capital reacting upon the commerce which occasioned it, so that it was an unequivocal proof, temporary prosperity was itself a cause of temporary distress. Of the continuance of this prosperity we have

have now the best assurance. The state of our exports during the last six months has been equal to what they have been in the most flourishing years of peace, and our imports have diminished in a very small proportion from what they have been at periods accounted the most prosperous. Under these circumstances, whatever temporary embarrassments may have arisen from the quantity of specie sent out of the country, for the want of a sufficient circulating medium, from the state of foreign markets, and from the increase of our capital; and however these difficulties may for a time have obstructed the ordinary operations of finance, the commercial character of the country has lost neither its vigour nor importance. If such has been the state of things at a period when the country has had to contend for every thing dear to it; if, notwithstanding all the obstacles which have clogged the machinery, the spring has retained so much force and energy, we may presume, that if by the obstinacy and ambition of the enemy we should be called to still greater exertions, that our resources as yet remain untouched, and that we shall be able to call them forth with a degree of concert and effect worthy the character of the British nation, and of the cause in which they will be employed. These resources have in them nothing hollow or delusive. They are the result of an accumulated capital of gradually increasing commerce, of high and established credit. They are the fruits of fair exertion, of laudable ingenuity, of successful industry; they have been produced under a system of order and justice, while we, under many disadvantages, have been contending against a country which exhibits in every respect the reverse of the picture. A proof that the regular operation of those principles must triumph over the unnatural and exhausting efforts of violence and extortion. By these resources we are now qualified to take such steps as may tend to conduct us to a solid and durable peace, or if we do not succeed in that object, to prosecute the contest with firmness and confidence. The honourable gentleman suggested one remark, that the speech contained no recognition of the court of France. He wasted a good deal of ingenuity in attempting to prove that it ought to have contained an express acknowledgment of the French Government. It ought to have occurred to him that a passport having been sent for and granted, some communication must have taken place on that occasion, and as the Executive Directory had been satisfied with the form of communication, and the mode in which they had been addressed,

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it could not be necessary for him to start a difficulty where they had found none. I can assure him that no question of etiquette, no difficulty of form, shall be permitted to stand in the way of negociation, or to obstruct the attainment of the great object of peace. As to the other points, the right honourable gentleman has suggested what lessons we ought to derive from experience. These lessons may be greatly varied according to the situations of parties and the different points of view in which the subject is considered. But when the right honourable gentleman tells us that the situation of this country is that of adversity, I can by no means agree to the proposition. How far it deserves to be ranked under that description, let those pronounce who are best acquainted with the state of our resources. It cannot surely be termed a state of adversity from any losses of our trade, the diminution of our capital, or from the reduction of any of our foreign possessions. We have not been greatly impoverished by the events of the war in the East and West Indies. We cannot be much weakened in our national strength, by having our navy, in consequence of repeated triumphs over every hostile squadron, raised to a greater degree of glory and of fame than it had ever before attained. Where, then, are we to look for the symptoms of this adversity? Are we to look for them in the losses and disasters of our allies? But, does the honourable gentleman appeal to these as a criterion of adversity, when in the same breath I hear him hold out as a source of complaint, that you are not under the present circumstances sure of a triumphant peace? And why can you not command such a peace? because you will not separate your own greatness, and your own commerce, from the interest and from the fate of your allies; because you refuse to purchase peace for yourselves on any other terms than those which will secure the tranquillity of Europe, and consider the situation of Great Britain as chained to that of the continent, by the bands of a liberal and comprehensive policy. If what has been lost on the continent is a subject of regret, it is at least a topic on which we have no reason to reproach ourselves. If even the prospect in that quarter continued as gloomy as it was some time since, and if the extremity had not roused the armies of the Emperor to those gallant and spirited exertions which have been crowned with such brilliant and unprecedented success, no share of blame could attach to us. While the violence of France has been over-running so great a part of Europe, and every where carrying desolation in its progress, your naval exertions have enabled you to counterbalance their successes, by acquisitions in
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different parts of the globe, and to pave the way for the restoration of peace to your allies, on terms which their own strength might have been unable to procure. If you look to the geographical situation of the war, the Emperor has not regained by his recent victories all that he had formerly lost. But do you count for nothing the destruction and ruin of those armies, by which all the previous successes of the enemy had been achieved? Do you count for nothing the glorious and immortal testimony that has been exhibited to mankind, that disciplined valour must finally triumph over those principles that the war was undertaken to oppose, and which owed all their extraordinary and unaccountable successes to the violence in which they originated, and the successes with which they were accompanied. A memorable warning has also been afforded with respect to the true consequences which have resulted to those foreign powers who in opposition to their true interests have courted the alliance of that enemy, and expected to find security in disgraceful tranquillity. Recent events have served also to exculpate the characters of those who were calumniated as desirous to embrace their principles, and receive their laws, and in Germany they have left behind them nothing but the memory of their wrongs, and a feeling of eternal resentment. Are such effects to be considered as of small importance, or to be put in competition with the reduction of a fortress, or the possession of a district? Of the virtues to be acquired in the school of adversity, the honourable gentleman only mentioned those of moderation and forbearance. Moderation I should consider as that virtue which is best adapted to the dawn of prosperity; there are other virtues of no less importance which are to be acquired under a reverse of fortune, and which are equally becoming in those who are called to suffer: there are the virtues of adversity endured and adversity resisted—of adversity encountered and adversity surmounted. The recent example of Germany has furnished an illustrious instance of fortitude and perseverance, and their fortitude and perseverance have had their merited reward. These were lessons which I trust this country has not to learn. England has never shewn itself deficient in firmness and magnanimity: it is unrivalled in resource; it has always been foremost in the career of honourable exertion, and it has only to maintain its accustomed vigour and perseverance to effect the restoration of general tranquillity upon terms consistent with the dignity of its own character, and the security and interest of Europe.

Mr. Fox said a few words in explanation, in which he complained that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had misrepresented his argument respecting the propriety of the time for negociation. He did not argue that because it was right to negociate now, that it was right to negociate at a former period. What he contended was (and he had not altered his opinion from any thing that he had heard) that if it was prudent and wise to send an Ambassador to Paris now, when the French have carried their arms into the heart of Germany, and are in possession of Italy, it would not have been dastardly and pusillanimous to have adopted that measure, when they had not one foot of that territory. He allowed that it might be sometimes pusillanimous to negotiate, but he was convinced that those who had been in the habit of applying this term during the course of the war to any proposition for negociation, had now renounced that opinion. He still retained his opinion respecting the new laws, and when he voted for the address, he did not include them in his construction of that part of it in which mention is made of the wisdom and energy of the laws.

The question upon the address was then put and carried *nemine contradicente*.

Adjourned till next day.

PROTEST of Earl FITZWILLIAM, against the late Address of the House of Lords to his Majesty.

Die Jovis, 6^o Octobris 1796.

The motion being made that the Address (in answer to his Majesty's Speech) do pass.—It passed in the affirmative.

DISSENTIENT,

1st, Because by this address, unamended as it stands, the sanction of the Lords is given to a series of measures as ill-judged with regard to their object as they are derogatory from the dignity of his Majesty's crown, and from the honour of this kingdom. The reiteration of solicitations for peace, to a species of power, with whose very existence all fair and equitable accommodation is incompatible, can have no other effect than that, which it is notorious, all our solicitations have hitherto had. They must encrease the arrogance and ferocity of the common enemy of all nations; they must fortify the credit, and fix the authority of an odious government over an enslaved people; they must impair the confidence of all other powers in the magnanimity, consistency, and fidelity of the British counsels; and it is much to be apprehended they will inevitably tend to break the spring of that energy, and to lower that spirit which has characterised in former times this high-minded nation, and which, far from sinking under misfortune, has even risen with the difficulties and dangers in which our country has been involved.

2. Because

2. Because no peace, such as may be capable of recruiting the strength, economizing the means, augmenting the resources, and providing for the safety of this kingdom and its inseparable connections and dependencies, can be had with the usurped power now exercising authority in France, considering the description, the character, and the conduct of those who compose that government, the methods by which they have obtained their power, the policy by which they hold it, and the maxims they have adopted, openly professed and uniformly acted on, towards the destruction of all governments not formed on their model and subservient to their domination.

3. Because the idea that this kingdom is competent to defend itself, its laws, liberties, and religion, under the general subjugation of all Europe, is presumptuous in the extreme, contradictory to the supposed motives for our present eager solicitations for peace, and is certainly contrary to the standing policy both of state and commerce, by which Great Britain has hitherto flourished.

4th. Because, while the common enemy exercises his power over the several states of Europe in the way we have seen, it is impossible long to preserve our trade, or, what cannot exist without it, our naval power. This hostile system seizes on the keys of the dominions of these powers, without any consideration of their friendship, their enmity, or their neutrality; prescribes laws to them as to conquered provinces; mulcts and fines them at pleasure; forces them, without any particular quarrel, into direct hostility with this kingdom, and expels us from such ports and markets as she thinks fit; inasmuch that (Europe remaining under its present slavery) there is no harbour which we can enter without her permission, either in a commercial or a naval character. This general interdict cannot be begged off; we must resist it by our power, or we are already in a state of vassalage.

5th. Because, whilst this usurped power shall continue thus constituted, and thus disposed, no security whatever can be hoped for in our colonies and plantations, those invaluable sources of our national wealth and our naval power. This war has shewn that the power prevalent in France, by intentionally disorganizing that plantation system (which France had in common with all other European nations), and by inverting the order and relations therein established, has been able with a naval force, altogether contemptible, and with very inconsiderable succours from Europe, to pass in a great measure the most powerful armaments ever sent from this country into the West Indies, and at an expence hitherto unparalleled; and has, by the force of example and by the effect of her machinations, produced, at little or no expence to herself, either of blood or treasure, universal desolation and ruin by the general destruction of every thing valuable and necessary for cultivation throughout several of our islands, lately among the most flourishing and productive. The new system by which these things have been effected, leaves our colonies equally endangered in peace as in war. It is therefore with this general system (of which the West India scheme is but a ramification) that all ancient establishments are essentially at war for the sake of self-preservation.

6th. Because

6th. Because it has been declared from the throne, and in effect the principle has been adopted by parliament, that there was no way likely to obtain a peace commonly safe and honourable, but through the ancient and legitimate government long established in France. That government in its lawful succession has been solemnly recognized, and assistance and protection as solemnly promised to those Frenchmen who should exert in themselves its restoration. The political principle upon which this recognition was made, is very far from being weakened by the conduct of the new-invented government. Nor are our obligations of good faith, pledged on such strong motives of policy to those who have been found in their allegiance dissolved; nor can they be so, until fairly-directed efforts have been made to secure this great fundamental point. None have yet been employed with the smallest degree of vigour and perseverance.

7th, Because the example of the great change made by the usurpation in the moral and political world (more dangerous than all her conquests) is by the present procedure confirmed in all its force. It is the first successful example furnished by history of the subversion of the ancient government of a great country, and of all its laws, orders, and religion, by the corruption of mercenary armies, and by the seduction of a multitude, bribed by confiscation to sedition, in defiance of the sense, and to the entire destruction of almost the whole proprietary body of the nation. The fatal effects of this example must be felt in every country. New means, new arms, new pretexts are furnished to ambition; and new persons are intoxicated with that poison.

8th, Because our eagerness in suing for peace may induce the persons exercising power in France, erroneously to believe, that we act from necessity, and are unable to continue the war; a persuasion, which, in the event of an actual peace, will operate as a temptation to them to renew that conduct which brought on the present war. Neither shall we have any of the usual securities in peace. In their treaties, they do not acknowledge the obligation of that law which for ages has been common to all Europe. They have not the same sentiments nor the same ideas of their interest in the conservation of peace, which have hitherto influenced all regular governments; they do not in the same manner feel public distress, or the private misery of their subjects; they will not find the same difficulty on the commencement of a new war to call their whole force into sudden action, where, by the law, every citizen is a soldier, and the persons and properties of all are liable at once to arbitrary requisition. On the other hand, no attempt has been made to shew in what manner, whether by alliances, by force, military or naval, or by the improvement and augmentation of our finances, we shall be better able to resist their hostile attempts after the peace than at the present hour. If we remain armed, we cannot reap the ordinary advantage of peace in economy; if we disarm, we shall be subject to be driven into a new war, under every circumstance of disadvantage, unless we now prepare ourselves to suffer, with patience and submission, whatever insults, indignities, and injuries we may receive from that insolent, domineering, and unjust power.

9th. Because

9th, Because the inutility of humbling ourselves again to solicit peace in a manner, which is a recognition of the French republic, contrary to all the principles of the war; the danger of peace, if obtained; the improbability of its duration; and the perseverance of the enemy throughout the interval of peace in their mischievous system, is not conjecture, but certainty. It has been avowed by the actual governors of France at the very moment when they had before them our application for a passport. They chose that moment for publishing a State Paper, breathing the most hostile mind. In it they stimulate and goad us, by language the most opprobrious and offensive. They frankly tell us, that it is not our interest to desire peace, for that they regard peace only as the opportunity of preparing fresh means for the annihilation of our naval power. By making peace they do not conceal that it will be their object—"to wrest from us our maritime preponderancy—to re-establish what they invidiously call the freedom of the seas—to give a new impulse to the Spanish, Dutch, and French marines—and to carry to the highest degree of prosperity the industry and commerce of those nations," which they state to be our riva's, which they charge us with "unjustly attacking, when we can no longer dupe," and which they throughout contemplate as their own dependencies, united in arms, and furnishing resources for our future humiliation and destruction. They resort to that well known and constant allusion of theirs to ancient history, by which representing "France as modern Rome, and England as modern Carthage," they accuse us of national perfidy, and hold England up "as an object to be blotted out from the face of the earth." They falsely assert that the English nation supports with impatience the continuance of the war, and has extorted all his Majesty's overtures for peace, "by complaints and reproaches;" and above all, not only in that passage, but throughout their official note, they shew the most marked adherence to that insidious and intolerable policy of their system, by which they, from the commencement of the revolution, sought to trouble and subvert all the governments in Europe. They studiously disjoin the English nation from its sovereign.

10th, Because, having acted throughout the course of this awful and momentous crisis upon the principles herein expressed, and after having on the present occasion, not only re-considered, and jealously examined their soundness and validity, but gravely attended to, and scrupulously weighed the merits of all those arguments which have been offered to induce a dereliction of them, conscientiously adhering to, and firmly abiding by them, I thus solemnly record them, in justification of my own conduct, and in discharge of the duty I owe to my king, my country, and the general interests of civil society.

WENTWORTH FITZWILLIAM.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, *October 7.*

Met at two o'clock, and carried up their address to his Majesty in the usual form upon such occasions.

Adjourned to Tuesday se'ennight.

The address and his Majesty's answer, are as follow, viz.

Die Jovis, 6^o Octobris, 1796.

Most gracious sovereign,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects the lords spiritual and temporal, in parliament assembled, beg leave to return your Majesty our humble thanks for your Majesty's most gracious speech from the throne.

We acknowledge with gratitude your Majesty's gracious condescension, in acquainting us that you have omitted no endeavours for setting on foot negotiations to restore peace to Europe, and to secure for the future the general tranquillity; and that the steps which you have taken for this purpose have at length opened the way to an immediate and direct negociation, the issue of which must either produce the desirable end of a just, honourable, and solid peace for us and for our allies, or must prove, beyond dispute, to what cause alone the prolongation of the calamities of war must be ascribed.

We entirely concur in the anxious wish expressed by your Majesty, that the step which your Majesty proposes to take of sending a person to Paris with full powers to treat for the restoration of general peace, may lead to the accomplishment of that object. But we are fully sensible that nothing can so much contribute to give effect to this desire, as our manifesting that we possess both the determination and the resources to oppose, with increased activity and energy, the further efforts with which we may have to contend.

We feel this peculiarly necessary at a moment when the enemy has openly manifested the intention of attempting a descent on these kingdoms. We are fully sensible that it cannot be doubted what would be the issue of such an enterprise; but we shall nevertheless think it our duty to take every precaution that may either preclude the attempt, or secure the speediest means of turning it to the confusion and ruin of the enemy.

In reviewing the events of the year, we have great pleasure in observing that, by the skill and exertions of your Majesty's navy, the extensive and increasing commerce of the Country has been protected to a degree almost beyond example, and that the fleets of the enemy have, for the greatest part of the year, been blocked up in their own ports; that the operations in the East and West Indies have been highly honourable to the British arms, and productive of great national advantage; and the valour and good conduct of your Majesty's forces, both by sea and land, have been eminently conspicuous.

We have also observed with the utmost satisfaction, that although the fortune of war on the Continent has been more various, and although the progress of the French armies threatened, at one period, the utmost danger to all Europe; yet from the honourable and dignified perseverance of your Majesty's ally the Emperor, and from the intrepidity, discipline, and invincible spirit of the Austrian forces, under the auspicious conduct of his royal highness the Archduke Charles, such a turn has lately been given to the course of the war, as may inspire a well grounded confidence that the final result of the campaign will prove more disastrous to the enemy than its commencement was for a time favourable to their hopes.

"We

"We rely with the utmost confidence on your Majesty's gracious assurance that whenever your Majesty shall be enabled to acquaint us with the final result of the discussions to which the apparently hostile disposition and conduct of the court of Madrid has given rise, they will afford to Europe a further proof of your Majesty's moderation and forbearance; and we intreat your Majesty to be assured that we are firmly determined to defend, against every aggression, the dignity, rights, and interests of the British empire.

"It has given us infinite pleasure to find that the distresses, which were in the last year experienced from the scarcity of Corn, are now, by the blessing of God, happily removed, and an abundant harvest affords the pleasing prospect of relief in that important article to the labouring classes of the community. That our internal tranquillity has also continued undisturbed:—that the general attachment of the people to the British constitution has appeared on every occasion, that the endeavours of those who wished to introduce anarchy and confusion into this country, have been repressed by the energy and wisdom of the laws.

"Persuaded, as we cannot but be, from long experience of your Majesty's virtues, that to defeat all the designs of our enemies, to restore to your people the blessings of a secure and honourable peace, to maintain inviolate their religion, laws, and liberty, and to deliver down unimpaired to the latest posterity, the glory and happiness of these kingdoms, is the constant wish of your Majesty's heart, and the uniform end of all your Majesty's actions.—Permit us most humbly to assure your Majesty, that in every measure that can conduce to these objects, your Majesty may rely upon our firm, zealous, and affectionate support which we consider as a duty which we owe to your Majesty and to our country."

His Majesty's most gracious answer.

"My Lords,

"I thank you very warmly for this dutiful and loyal Address.

"The sentiments you have expressed, in the present important crisis of public affairs, afford Me the surest pledge of your support in such measures as the interest of the country shall require; and you may rely upon every exertion being made on my part for the welfare, happiness, and safety of my people."

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, October 7.

The *Speaker* took the chair a little after three o'clock, and observed, that as there were some petitions to be presented, complaining of undue returns of members to serve in parliament, perhaps the House would pursue the mode which had been usually taken on such occasions. He would therefore

submit to their consideration, the resolutions then entered into.

The *Master of the Rolls* moved the resolutions, which were divided into five classes; 1st, such as complained of no return; 2d, such as complained of double returns; 3d, petitions of two or more persons; 4th, such as complained of returns only; and 5th, petitions which did not come within either of the other classes. The adoption of these resolutions was agreed to.

A petition was then presented on behalf of John George Phillips, Esq. complaining of an undue return for the county of the borough of Carmarthen. Ordered to be taken into consideration on the 27th of this month.

Another on behalf of George Tierney, esq. complaining of an undue return for the borough of Southwark. To be taken into consideration on the first of November next.

Another on behalf of lord Preston and Robert Adair, esq. complaining of an undue return for Camelford. To be taken into consideration on the 3d of November.

Another on behalf of the inhabitants of the borough of Camelford. To be taken into consideration on the same day.

Another from Robert Miller, esq. complaining of an undue return for the borough of Leominster. To be taken into consideration on the 8th of November.

The *Speaker* observed, that the House had made an order in the year 1789, requiring petitioners complaining of elections to enter into certain recognizances, &c. perhaps the House would adopt that order for the future. The order being read, was agreed to.

Lord *Morpeth* brought up the report of the address to his Majesty, which was read a first and second time, and agreed to *nem. con.*

Ordered to be presented to his Majesty by the whole House, and that such members as are of the privy council, shall wait on his Majesty, and humbly request to know his Majesty's pleasure to receive it.

Ordered that his Majesty's speech be taken into consideration to-morrow. Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

SATURDAY, OCT. 8.

The *Speaker* took the Chair a little before two o'clock.

Lord *Stopford* reported at the bar, that he had attended his Majesty

Majesty to know when he would be pleased to receive the address of that House, when he was graciously pleased to appoint that day at two o'clock.

A petition was presented on behalf of General McLeod, complaining of an undue return for the borough of Melbourn-Port.—Ordered to be taken into consideration on the 10th of November.

Another petition was presented against the return for the borough of Guildford.—Ordered to be taken into consideration on the 15th of November.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* moved the order of the day, which was for taking his Majesty's speech into consideration.

The order being read,

The *Speaker* read that part of the King's speech which relates to supplies.

It was then moved, That the consideration of the present motion be deferred to Monday, which was agreed to.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* then moved that the House should, on Monday next, resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House to consider of a supply to be granted to his Majesty.—Ordered.

Adjourned to Monday.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, OCT. 10.

The *Speaker* acquainted the House that he had presented their address to his Majesty at St. James's, on Saturday, to which his Majesty was pleased to make the following most gracious answer.

"GENTLEMEN,

"I return you my particular thanks for this dutiful and affectionate address. The cordial and unanimous assurances of your continued and zealous support afford me the utmost satisfaction in this important conjuncture: They must have the happiest tendency to give effect to my endeavours for the restoration of peace on secure, honourable, and adequate terms; and they afford me, at the same time, a just confidence, that, if this desirable end cannot be obtained, I shall be enabled to prosecute the war with re-doubled vigour and activity in support of our dearest interests."

A Petition was presented from W. Wrightson, Esq. complaining of an undue election for the Borough of Downton, which

which was ordered to be taken into consideration on Thursday the 17th of November.

Another petition was presented from Thomas Burges, Esq. complaining of an undue election for the Borough of Bridport, which was ordered to be taken into consideration on Tuesday the 22d of November.

The House having resolved itself into a committee, and having taken the King's speech into consideration, voted that a supply be granted to his Majesty.

The House being resumed,

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* then moved, That there be laid before this House, an account of the value of British and foreign merchandize imported and exported for the half years ending the 5th of July 1795, the 5th of January 1796, and the 5th of July 1796; distinguishing the several articles which exceed in value £.10,000.

That there be laid before this House, an account of the net produce of all the permanent taxes in the quarters ending on the 5th of January, 5th of April, 5th of July, and 10th of October, in the years 1795 and 1796, respectively.

That there be laid before this House, an account of the net produce of the permanent taxes which subsisted previous to the 5th of January 1791, in the years ending the 10th of October 1795 and 1796 respectively; adding thereto the difference between the produce of the duties on the home-made spirits in each year respectively, and the average produce thereof in three years ending the 5th of January 1795; and adding likewise the amount of the sums paid from the revenue of customs on account of bounties for corn imported, or bounties for raising seamen.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, Oct. 11.

A petition was presented by Colonel Fullarton, of Fullarton, against the return for Ayrshire, which was ordered to be taken into consideration upon Thursday the 24th of November next.

A motion was made and agreed to, that no private petitions should be received after Friday the 3d day of February next.

Mr. *Hobart* brought up the report of the committee of supply, which was read and agreed to.

The

The House agreed to resolve itself into a committee of supply to-morrow.

A motion was made and carried, that estimates should be laid before the House, of the navy, of the half pay of officers and marines, of the navy buildings, &c. for the year 1797; also estimates of the expences of guards, garrisons, land forces, half pay, ordnance, pensioners of Chelsea Hospital, &c. for the same period.

A motion was made, that there be laid before this House, an account of the charges incurred, and not provided for in the estimates of last year. Also an account of the disposition of the sums voted for last year; and that an humble address should be presented to his Majesty, praying that he would be graciously pleased to order the said accounts to be made out and laid before the House.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* moved that the paragraph of his Majesty's speech which related to the intention announced by the enemy of invading this country, should be read, which being done, he said that he intended to submit to the House some considerations upon this subject, and at present he should move, that this part of the speech should be referred to a committee of the whole House, and that the House should on this day se'nnight resolve itself into the said committee, which motions were agreed to.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 12.

A petition was presented on behalf of Mr. Honeywood and Mr. Gipps, complaining of an undue return for Canterbury.—Ordered to be taken into consideration on the 29th of November next.

Another was presented on behalf of Peter Moore and Philip Francis, Esqrs. complaining of an undue return for the Borough of Tewkesbury.—Ordered to be taken into consideration on the 1st of December next.

Mr. *Rose* moved, That there be laid before this House an account of the amount of the Exchequer Bills issued on the Acts of the last session of parliament.—Ordered.

The order of the day for a committee of supply was deferred to Friday.

Adjourned.

HOUSE

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, OCT. 13.

M^r. Serjeant *Adair* gave notice, that on Monday next he would move for leave to bring in a Bill similar to that which passed through the House last year, and which was stopped by the Lords, because it was presented at a period of the session when there was not time for discussing its merits. The object of the Bill is to make some regulations respecting the obligation of the quakers to pay tithes, and to make their affirmation in Courts of Justice, evidence in criminal as well as in civil cases.

A petition was presented from Sir John Henderson, of Fordel, complaining of an undue election for the borough of Stirling, &c. which was ordered to be taken into consideration on Tuesday, the 6th of December.

Mr. *Rose* gave notice, that it was proposed the next day to move in a committee of supply to vote the quota of seamen for 1797.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, OCT. 14.

An account of the amount of the imports and exports for the last year was presented by the Comptroller of the Customs, and ordered to lie on the table, and to be printed.

A petition was presented by the inhabitants of Downton, against the return for that Borough; which was referred to the committee for the consideration of the former petition.

The *Secretary at War* laid before the House a variety of army estimates, which he moved to be taken into consideration in a committee of supply this day se'nnight.

Mr. *Broughton* moved for an account of the revenue and charges of the East India Company for the years 1795, 1796; an account of their stock and capital; an account of their sales of goods for the same period; an account of the amount of the sale of goods, with the rate of freight and private profit, and from the year 1793.

The House resolved itself into a committee of supply.

Mr. *Pybus* said, that however anxious they all might be that the negotiations which had been opened might conclude in an honourable peace, the committee would still perceive the necessity of placing our means of defence in a respectable posture

posture, and preparing the country for either alternative. He therefore entertained full confidence that the resolutions he had to propose would meet with no opposition. He then moved "That one hundred and twenty thousand men should be employed for the sea service for the year 1797, including 20,000 marines, and that 4l. per month for 13 months should be granted for each man."

General *Tarleton* declared, he did not intend to make any objections to the resolutions which had been proposed, nor to any measure which tended to place our naval strength upon a respectable footing. No man could rejoice more than he did in the successful displays of our naval superiority. No man heard with more heartfelt satisfaction the exploits which had lately been achieved by our navy, and during the war. All those who were friends to the constitution must feel proud on such events, because our naval strength was at once the best guard of the constitution and its security against external danger. Still, however, as a representative of one of the greatest commercial towns in the world, he could not forbear from submitting to the other side of the House certain points on which he desired information. His Majesty's speech had stated that for the greater part of the year the fleets of the enemy had been blocked up in their own ports. On this he would only say, that with the immense naval force which ministers could employ, it was to be expected that a signal superiority should be displayed. He wished to ask, however, how ministers had allowed Richery's squadron to sail from Cadiz. Perhaps, indeed, he might be able to answer this question by imputing to the critical state of affairs between this country and Spain the passiveness of ministers upon this occasion, who might chuse to permit them to proceed on their destination rather than incur the danger of a rupture with that country; in this view then their conduct was certainly wise, but there was another point on which he expected a pointed answer. He wished to know whether ministers had received any official accounts of the ravage and destruction committed by the enemy on several of our possessions, particularly the settlement of Newfoundland, of which reports had been for some time in circulation? There was likewise another rumour, of a considerable loss sustained by the capture of a Quebec convey. As there was another fleet expected of more consequence than that to which the disaster had happened, he wished to know whether ministers had taken any means to provide

provide against a similar accident; whether any force had been destined to oppose the operations of the enemy at Newfoundland, or whether they trusted for the protection of the place to the effect of the season?

Mr. *Pybus* said that government certainly had received official accounts that the enemy had appeared and committed a certain degree of damage upon the coast of Newfoundland; but they had also reason to believe that they had now retired from that quarter.

The two resolutions were then put and carried; and the House being resumed, the report was ordered to be received on Monday.

The House resolved to go farther into a committee of supply on Monday.

Adjourned till Monday.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, *October 17.*

A petition was presented, complaining of an undue return for the borough of Malmesbury. Ordered to be taken into consideration on the 1st of November next.

Another petition was presented from the inhabitants of the same borough to the same effect. Ordered to be taken into consideration on the same day.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said that it appeared to him to be necessary that some measure of regulation should be adopted relative to petitions presented to the House, complaining of undue returns at elections, and that he should have to propose something to that effect the next day.

Mr. *Hobart* brought up the report of the committee of supply.

The resolutions, that 120,000 seamen be employed for the sea service for the year 1797, at 4l. per man per month, were read and agreed to.

The House agreed to go into a committee of the whole House on Wednesday next, to consider further of a supply to be granted to his Majesty, and of ways and means for raising the supplies.

QUAKERS.

Mr. *Adair* said, he rose in pursuance of the notice he had given on a former day, of his intention to move for leave to bring in a bill for the relief of that respectable body of people called Quakers. His motives for which he would state as
briefly

briefly as possible, as well as the reasons which induced him to bring forward the business in the last parliament. He entertained no doubt but that the opinion of the present parliament upon the subject would totally coincide with that of the last. He was sure that in the last parliament, the principles on which the bill was framed, were such as gave universal satisfaction. The object of the bill which he wished to see pass into a law, was two-fold :—first, to grant relief to the Quakers, with regard to the imprisonment of their persons for non-payment of tythes ; and in the next place, in order to render their oaths unnecessary in courts of justice. Nothing, he said, could be more congenial to the principles of justice, than to extend that relief, which the bill intended, to a body of men, who were universally and justly allowed to be as unoffending and as obedient to the laws as any class of men in the country, of whatever description they might be ; and certain he was, however we might differ from them on account of their religious scruples, that the House, actuated as it was by the principles and love of liberty, would be ever ready to give way to the scruples of persons upon matters of religion or conscience. It was in consequence of the dictates of this principle of toleration that the legislature had conceived it necessary, in the reign of king William, to grant indulgences of a particular nature to the Quakers. It was well known, at the period to which he alluded, that the Quakers entertained certain scruples, no matter whether well or ill founded, with respect to the application of the divine law to subjects of a temporal concern, and the using the ceremony of an invocation of the deity for the purpose of giving a sanction to the transactions of mankind. That they had been sincere in those scruples was clear, and evident to every one, by their having been productive of temporal disadvantage to them, and by their having, in an infinite variety of instances, subjected them to great inconveniences. Those scruples had been attended to, as early as the reign of king William, and an act of parliament was then passed for the purpose of declaring, that where tythes, not exceeding the amount of 10*l.* were due from them and with-held, a remedy should be given by distress ; a law, which in its operation was found to be humane and productive of the best effect. By that act, a power was given to recover the amount of tythes to a certain extent, by a summary application, at a small expence, and by which payment was compelled in a manner calculated to remove all scruples. The scruples of the Quakers had not the effect of preventing

them from doing all such acts as were according to law, provided those acts were not of an active nature. They did not induce them to resist the law, and for that reason, in recovering tythes in all courts of justice, the process has ever been of such a nature as ultimately to compel the pronouncing a decree, and to enforce the judgment by levying on the estate of the defendant, but in default of there being sufficient whereon to levy, or if the party became insolvent, an attachment issued against the person, which attachment, in its effects, amounted to perpetual imprisonment. There had occurred several instances in which, in consequence of the issuing such attachments, the parties had been imprisoned a considerable period in preference to paying the money. It had been for the purpose of providing a remedy for that evil that the statutes in the reign of king William had been made. Some further regulations had been made subsequent to that period, authorizing justices to levy for non-payment of tythes, but the sum being limited, as in the former case, they had not been productive of that benefit which he wished to claim on their behalf. The serjeant said, it was his intention to adopt the principle of the bill which passed the House last parliament; and to give it effect, he would move to repeal the limitations contained in the former laws upon the subject; for he wished every proper indulgence should be extended to that respectable body, and every attention paid to their religious scruples. The mode of recovering tythes, by levying against the property, was, he observed, the most beneficial one that could be adopted for the advantage of all parties; it enabled the one to recover his demand, and to the other it prevented expence in resisting that which his conscience compelled him to resist; it would therefore be equally for the advantage of the one party and the other. He did not mean to apply this part of his observations to those intricate and difficult questions which might arise where certain *modus's* were set up, to determine which, required a degree of knowledge not to be expected from a common magistrate. Questions of this kind he could not think proper to submit to the consideration of justices. He therefore wished the bill to be so framed, as to leave it open to application to the superior courts of justice; but in order to prevent the judges of those courts from being subjected to trouble or inconvenience from unnecessary litigations, he should wish them to have the discretionary power, if it appeared to them that the appeal to the superior court was unnecessary, and that the subject matter was of such a nature

nature as two justices could have decided, to order the person or persons, supposing he or they were successful, who had adopted that mode, to receive no more costs than if the application had been made to the justices.—Such, he said, were the principal outlines of the bill, which he desired the House to pass, with such alterations as might be thought necessary. There was, however, a separate and distinct object intended by the present bill to that which passed in the last parliament, upon which he wished to offer a few words to the House. He meant a new provision with respect to the administration of the justice of the country, by means of the evidence received from Quakers in courts of justice, where their evidence was required. The inconvenience of excluding the public and the crown from the benefit of the evidence of Quakers, had been felt by himself in a great criminal court, and by all those who were concerned in the administration of justice, he should therefore follow up the provisions of the last bill, by the introduction of one to legalize their affirmation, in criminal as well as civil causes. During the last century, courts of justice would have doubted the principle of the act of parliament, and he rather thought the restriction of the act had been the means of preventing courts of justice, from receiving the affirmations of Quakers, or of extending the power of the courts. He was well satisfied that there had been many instances, where persons without the form of an oath, had been admitted to give evidence in courts of justice, and where their evidence had been received, and he had no doubt but judges would have done the same with respect to the Quakers, had they not conceived themselves restrained by the operation of the act of king William, which was another reason why he should move for its repeal. Such a measure could not be considered as an indulgence to the Quakers, whose principles led them, if possible, not to interfere in matters that might eventually affect the lives of individuals; and he knew that many were glad to shelter themselves under the restrictions of the act, to avoid coming forward in prosecutions where their evidence would have been of advantage to the community. He therefore thought the repeal of such restrictions necessary for the administration of justice. He said he would not, in that stage of the business, further trespass upon the House. He conceived it necessary to state thus much of the principles of the bill, for the benefit of those who were not present at the debate in the last parliament. There were parts of the bill which could be better discussed in a committee than in

any other stage of it; he should, if permitted, bring it in precisely in the form in which it passed that House in the last parliament. Gentlemen might of course propose what amendment they should think fit in the committee. He did not indeed pledge himself not to propose some amendments in it himself. Perhaps he might be of opinion that the amendments that were adopted by the House in the former bill ought to be left out. Without pledging himself, therefore, to adhere to every clause in the bill which he had the honour to propose, he moved "That leave be given to bring in a bill for the further relief of the people called Quakers, as to the imprisonment of their persons for the non-payment of tithes; and for making their solemn affirmation evidence in criminal as well as civil cases."

Mr. *Abbott* seconded the motion.

Granted.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, *October 18.*

Baron *de Dunstanville*, (late Sir Francis Basset), was introduced, and took his seat.

Mr. *Hobart* brought up a naturalization bill from the commons.

The House adjourned till to-morrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

A petition was presented from Edward Knubley, Esq. and Sir James Graham, complaining of an undue election for Carlisle, which was ordered to be taken into consideration on Thursday the 8th of December.

Also, a petition from ——— Shipley, esq. against the election of Colchester, which was referred for consideration to Tuesday the 13th of December.

Likewise a petition from John Hill, esq. against the Shrewsbury election, to be considered on Thursday the 15th of December.

Mr. Owen, from the East India company, presented certain papers at the bar, which were made out pursuant to an order of the House on a former day, which were laid upon the table, and ordered to be printed for the use of the members.

Mr. *Rose* gave notice, that it was proposed in the committee of ways and means, the next day, to vote the land and malt tax for the ensuing year.

Mr.

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* brought up the additional articles of the treaty of navigation and commerce between Great Britain and the United States of America, as ratified at London and Philadelphia, which were ordered to lie upon the table.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that as it would certainly be satisfactory to all the parties concerned in controverted elections that they should be decided as soon as possible, he had the preceding day given notice, that he would on this day suggest some regulations, in order to bring them to the speediest possible termination. It was impossible for him to extend these regulations to all the petitions, because there were still two days open for their reception, and he did not know how many in the course of that time might be presented. But as there had been twelve petitions presented already, he conceived that six of these might be decided before the Christmas holidays, without interfering with other matters of important discussion, which would certainly occupy a considerable share of the attention of the house. With respect to the rest he hoped that they would be heard as soon as possible after the Christmas recess, and that this parliament would set an example of dispatch in business, upon which the character and dignity of the house so much depended, and that they would incontestibly prove the beneficial tendency of the bill lately passed upon the subject, by settling every controverted election in the course of the present session.

INVASION.

The order of the day having been read, and the House having resolved itself into a Committee to consider the clause of his Majesty's speech respecting an invasion—that paragraph of the speech was read as follows :

You will feel this peculiarly necessary at a moment when the enemy has openly manifested the intention of attempting a descent on these kingdoms. It cannot be doubted what would be the issue of such an enterprize ; but it befits your wisdom to neglect no precautions that may either preclude the attempt, or secure the speediest means of turning it to the confusion and ruin of the enemy.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, after the unanimous vote which the House gave upon the first day of the session, and their universal concurrence in that part of the address which respects a foreign invasion, it would be doing injustice to the feelings which were then expressed, were I to make any apology for calling their attention to the subject on the present occasion. I shall not detain them therefore a single moment

ment in shewing the propriety of laying before them at so early a period the measures which I mean this day to propose. It is equally our duty and our interest by every means in our power, and by every exertion of which we are capable, if possible, in the language of the address, to preclude the attempt, and at the same time to take such measures of defence as shall cause the invasion, if it should be attempted, to issue in the confusion and ruin of the enemy. I shall not at present go much at large into the detail of preparations, but merely suggest a general outline of defence, which if it should be approved of by the committee, may be particularly discussed when the Bills are afterwards brought in upon the resolutions. The general considerations are few and obvious. The natural means of the defence of this kingdom is certainly its naval force. In this department, however, little now remains to be done, our fleet at this moment being more respectable and more formidable than ever it was at any other period in the history of the country. But strong and powerful, even as it at present is, it is capable of considerable encrease, could an additional supply of seamen, or even landsmen, who in a very short time might be trained to an adequate knowledge of the naval service, be procured. For this purpose I would suggest a levy upon the different parishes throughout the kingdom, an expedient precisely similar to that which was practised with so much success nearly two years ago. This levy, however, I would not confine as a mode of supply for the sea service. It is certainly of the highest importance both for the internal defence of the country and the security of our foreign possessions, that all the old regiments should be compleat. But every one must be sensible, that from the numbers which in these regiments have fallen a sacrifice to sickness and the fortune of war, a more expeditious method must be adopted for their completion, than the ordinary mode of recruiting supplies, in order that the country may be able to avail itself of this arm of strength. I would propose, therefore, in the first place, a levy of fifteen thousand men from the different parishes for the sea service, and for recruiting the regiments of the line. The committee, however, must be sensible when a plan of invasion is in agitation, a scheme which almost at another time would not have been conceived, and an attempt, which by any other enemy, than that with which we have to contend, might have been justly deemed impracticable, that a more extensive and a more expensive plan of prevention and of defence is necessary. In digesting this plan there are two considerations of which we ought not
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to lose fight. The first is the means (which must not be altogether new) of calling together a land force, sufficiently strong to frustrate the attempt, keeping our naval force entirely out of view: and secondly, to adopt such measures in raising this force as shall not materially interfere with the industry, the agriculture and the commerce of the country. It will be for the House to decide upon the degree to which the former consideration ought to be permitted to interfere with the latter. A primary object will be to raise, and gradually to train, such a force as may in a short time be fit for service; of all the modes of attaining this object, there is none so expeditious, so effectual, and attended with so little expence, as that of raising a supplemental levy of militia, to be grafted upon the present establishment. I should propose that this supplement shall consist of sixty thousand men, not to be immediately called out, but to be enrolled, officered and gradually trained, so as to be fit for service at a time of danger. The best mode of training them without drawing too many at one time for their regular pursuits, will be to embody one sixth part in regular succession, each to be trained for twenty days, in the course of which they may become tolerable proficient in the military exercise. With respect to the mode of conducting the levy, the returns that have been lately made from the different counties shew the present levies to be extremely disproportioned, and that the clause in the act which provides against this abuse has never been executed. Accordingly we find that in some counties the proportion is one out of seven, and in others one out of three. It will be expedient therefore to regulate the future levy, not by the proportions now existing, but by a general estimate of the inhabitants who are able to bear arms. The next consideration which merits attention, is the manner in which the troops are to be furnished, which I think ought to be generally from all parts of the kingdom, and that an obligation be imposed upon those who are ballotted either to serve in person, or to provide a substitute; and the better to preserve the general proportion, that this substitute be provided either from the parish in which the person ballotted resides, or from a parish immediately adjoining. It will be proper also to remove the present exemption from those who have more than one child, on the express condition that they shall not be called upon to serve out of the parish in which they live. {The mode of training only one sixth part of the whole, twenty days in succession, as it will only withdraw ten thousand at a time from their usual occupations, consequently will not much infringe upon the
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general order of the community. Of course they must be provided with some sort of uniform, but it will be of the coarsest kind, and such as may be purchased at a small expence. A sufficient number of arms will also be in readiness for supplying each man in the moment of danger. Another measure which I would suggest to the committee, is to provide a considerable force of irregular cavalry. The regular cavalry on the present establishment is certainly by no means inconsiderable, and the Yeomanry cavalry, which from their numbers are sufficiently respectable, we have experienced to be highly useful in securing the quiet and maintaining the internal tranquillity of the country. But with a view to repelling an invasion, the farther that this species of force is extended, the greater advantage is likely to accrue from it. Besides, it is a species of force which may be provided in a mode that will be attended with almost no expence to the public, and with little hardship to individuals. In order to calculate the extent to which these irregular cavalry may be raised, it is necessary to estimate the number of horses which are kept for pleasure throughout the kingdom, and by raising the levy in this proportion we shall have the satisfaction to think that it will only fall upon those who have a considerable stake to defend. By the produce of the tax, which is as good a criterion as any of the number of horses kept for pleasure, we find that in Scotland, England and Wales, they amount to about two hundred thousand, one hundred and twenty of which belong to persons who keep only one horse of the kind, the rest to persons, some of whom keep ten, and various other proportions. It certainly would not be a very severe regulation when compared with the object meant to be accomplished, to require one tenth of these horses for the publick service. I would therefore propose that every person who keeps ten horses shall be obliged to furnish one horse and a horseman, to serve in a corps of cavalry; that every person who keeps more than ten horses, and a number falling short of twenty, after furnishing a horse and horseman, for the first ten, shall subscribe a proportionate sum for the rest, which shall be applied to defray the general expence; that those who keep twenty shall furnish two, three if thirty, &c. and that those who keep fewer than ten shall form themselves into a class, when it shall be decided by ballot who at the common expence shall furnish the horse and the horseman. These troops thus raised will be provided with uniform and accoutrements, formed into corps, and put under proper officers. And surely when the means are compared with the ob-
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ject to be attained and the expence to which individuals will be subjected, with the security of the property which they possess, on one will complain that the end or the security is purchased at too dear a price. There is still another resource which, though it may not appear so serious as those which have been already mentioned, ought not to be neglected. Upon the supposition of an invasion, it would certainly be of no small importance to form bodies of men, who from their dexterity in using fire-arms, might be highly useful in harassing the operations of the enemy. The employment of such men for the purpose of defending the country, and harassing the enemy in case of an invasion, must be attended with the most serious and important consequences. Gentlemen will naturally guess that I am now alluding to that description of men called gamekeepers, and to others of the same class. I do most certainly allude to them, for there are many whose personal services would be of the utmost advantage. But I also, and more particularly, allude to such instances where gentlemen are gamekeepers for their own amusement, where they are gamekeepers merely for the satisfaction of being so, not gamekeepers of necessity, but of choice; in such cases there can be no hardship in obliging those gentlemen, if we cannot have their personal services, at least to find a substitute, who may be as well calculated to defend the country as themselves. I do therefore propose, that those persons who shall have taken out licences to shoot game, or deputations for gamekeepers, shall within a certain period, be at liberty to return the same if they think proper, but if after that period they shall continue their licences or deputations for gamekeepers, then they shall be obliged to find substitutes. I observe gentlemen smiling at the idea of raising a force by such means, but that smile will be converted into surprize, when they hear that the number of persons who have taken out those licences are no fewer than 7000. Such a plan cannot be considered as a means of internal defence likely to be approved of by every person in the country. I have stated to the Committee the general outline of the Bill. I shall defer saying much more on the subject; it will be more satisfactory to speak particularly when the resolution is reported to the House, than to enter into any further detail at this moment. The number of cavalry which I propose to raise in the manner I have mentioned will be 20,000; but with respect to whether there must not be some other additional mode adopted, it is impossible to say exactly,

on account of not being able to ascertain with certainty how many persons it may be necessary to exempt, on account of their being in orders, or for other reasons. Thus have I pointed out the means by which I propose to raise 15,000 men to be divided between the sea and the land service, to raise the supplemental levy of 60,000 for the Militia of which one-sixth part is to be forthwith called out to exercise; to raise 20,000 men by means of persons taking out the licences to shoot game and keep gamekeepers, or on such other persons as may hereafter be deemed necessary. If the propositions I have mentioned should be approved, I should wish the resolutions to be printed, and if immediately, to introduce the Bill, to carry it on to a committee, and to fill up the blanks, and then to allow an interval of a week for its discussion. I mention this in order that more time should not be taken up than is absolutely necessary for the due examination of the principles of the Bill; since, gentlemen, you cannot but recollect, when you are once satisfied, and have determined upon the propriety of any particular measure, every day, every hour of delay, is attended with additional danger. I shall now move that the chairman be directed to report to the House, "that it is the opinion of the committee, that a Bill should be brought in for raising a certain number of men in the several counties of England, and the several counties, burghs and stewartries of Scotland, for the service of his Majesty."

Mr. *Sheridan* said, sir, I agree with the right hon. gentleman whose motion has just been read, that a fitter opportunity for entering into a discussion of the detail of the measures proposed, will occur after the Bills have been brought in. I also agree with him, that in the proposition which he has submitted to you, he has followed up the pledge which this House gave, to neglect no precaution that might either preclude an attempt at an invasion, or turn it to the confusion and ruin of the enemy. At the same time, however, that I do agree with the right hon. gentleman in both these points, I must say, that I did expect some explanation from his Majesty's ministers, of the actual necessity for adopting any measure at all. The House, sir, must, I am sure, feel that it is placed in a situation of considerable embarrassment; it is called upon by the right hon. gentleman to impose heavy burthens upon the people, and to suspend the labour of a large part of the community, a circumstance not a little to be lamented at a period like the present, and in the present
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state of the country. In such a state, I scarcely, I should think, need remind the House that it ought, in the first instance, to be convinced that there is a real necessity for the adoption of such measures, and if this parliament is not disposed to imitate the conduct of the last parliament, to vote the money of the people, and to invest ministers with unbounded powers upon the mere assertions of those ministers, if the present parliament, which contains a greater number of new members than any former parliament; (which is certainly a matter of pleasing intelligence to the country) if the present parliament, I say, does not act on the same terms of blind and unlimited confidence as the last, if it considers the measures of the executive government with extreme jealousy, a jealousy warranted and sanctioned by the constitution; if this parliament is resolved to do these things, then I shall hope they at least will think it a duty they owe to their constituents to demand some farther satisfaction upon the subject, before they give an unqualified assent to a project so new and unprecedented. There is something extremely peculiar in the mode of announcing the attempt in his Majesty's speech, which I have certainly a right to consider as the speech of the minister. The words *manifested an intention*, are vague and indefinite, and I could wish that by some more express communication they would attach to themselves a greater share of responsibility for the measures which are in contemplation, than can result from the cautious terms in which his Majesty's speech is couched. I wish to be informed whether they know any thing of what is passing in France, or whether any preparations have been making for such an attempt? I am sure if they are entirely ignorant of this, the secret service-money voted by parliament must have been much misapplied. I say that they ought to be firmly convinced of the danger before they are resolved to propose such measures as the present. If, by the manifestation of an intention to invade this country, they mean to allude to what may have been said by some members of the French legislature, or what we all of us have read in the French papers, if they call this a manifestation of a determination to attempt a descent, I shall contend that these are too slight grounds to call upon the House for such a provision as the present. If they build their opinions upon such rant, as Dumourier's fixing the French flag upon the Tower of London; if they are influenced by some idle speech or rhodomondale of any member of the two councils, I say that such speeches cannot be called a manifestation of an intention to invade us. Yet I wish to have it understood, that if any

such intention is really entertained, I have not the slightest doubt that the event will be what the speech predicts, utter ruin and confusion to the enemy. Sir, if the enemy think that the country would not rise against them as one man; if they have any idea that they should be joined by any part of the inhabitants; if they suppose that they should not be encumbered and overwhelmed by the mass that would be opposed to them, they and their ministers must be dupes indeed. Without detracting, however, from the ardour and spirit of any person, I must confess that I have not that military Quixotism, that chivalry of patriotism about me, as to wish, like some gentlemen in the city, that 400,000 men might land, merely that the courage of the country, in defeating their attempts, might be made manifest. Sir, an invasion is not an event to be wished; but when I say, that it is not to be wished, I must be understood also to have no fear, no doubt, what the consequences would be if any such project were carried into execution. To the statements produced by the right hon. gentleman, I do not mean to object; but what I must repeat, and what I contend the House ought to know, is, that the belief of ministers of the danger of an invasion is well founded. From us, ministers have no right to expect confidence; we cannot but remember, though there may be many gentlemen in the House who may not, how frequently we have contended that ministers have in other cases, and on other pretences created alarms merely to increase their power; alarms which we have proved to have been wholly groundless. It is with this remembrance about me that I call on the executive government for an explanation now. This is not the first time that the country has been alarmed with the idea of an invasion. In a former war it was known that a large body of troops was collected on the French coasts under the command, I believe, of Marshal Saxe. It was known, too, that the French ports were full of ships, calculated for the purpose of making a descent: this was some manifestation of an intention to invade the country. Have ministers information of similar preparations now? If they have, I must confide in their assurances. But I must again declare, that if they consider the idle rant and rhodomantade speeches of any member of the legislature of France, as a sufficient manifestation of the project of an invasion, that such grounds I consider as too light and unsubstantial to found upon them a measure of such importance, and replete with such inconveniences as the present. Sir, the idea of invasion is by no means new, we have all of us heard talk
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of a design of invading France and marching to Paris—a design expressed by a gentleman of great weight and intimately connected with his Majesty's ministers, expressed too in the most grave and solemn of all places, the British Senate, and not contradicted by any member of administration, but even received with applause, and yet though this was openly asserted, and though the person asserting it afterwards entered into the military line, and is now a colonel of a regiment of cavalry, thereby manifesting the sincerity of his intention, yet I never heard that the government of France considered the assertion as a manifestation of an intention to invade France, or adopted any measures in consequence of it. I have read out of doors that the French have experienced important defeats in Germany, that they are likely to experience the same in Italy, that their finances are in the most depressed condition, that their energies are almost exhausted, that their resources are nearly gone; why therefore, with this knowledge, are we to be so much more alarmed about an invasion now than we were in any former period of the war? unless indeed like the frogs in the fable who were afraid of being crushed by the conquered bull that was beaten, we think if the French are defeated in Germany they will come here upon a more hazardous enterprise in order to regain their credit. But why is not the country at this moment in a proper condition? I call on ministers to answer this. What were their former declarations? One right honourable gentleman (Mr. Dundas) in recounting to the House, the number of military corps, declared that the country had nothing to fear from the invasion of all Europe; this declaration, he wished all Europe to hear him make; and certainly, the right honourable gentleman's stentorian voice was as well calculated to produce the desired effect, as that of any gentleman's in the House; but least it should not have carried the tidings to the ears of all the new members who now sat in the House, I will restate it. The right hon. gentleman said, that the number of military corps was so great, that the country had nothing to fear from the united efforts of all Europe. Such was the unexampled strength of our navy, and such the courage and loyalty of our regular troops, aided by the zeal and intrepidity of a vast establishment of fencible and volunteer corps, that there was no possible danger to which we could be exposed, whether from our foreign or domestic enemies, that we might not encounter with the steadiest assurance of success. If this was not a mere spurt of loyalty, and if the persons who composed these

these corps had enrolled themselves not from motives of interest or of vanity, but from patriotism and devotion to their country, why repose so little confidence in their exertions, or distrust their fidelity to a cause by which they were pledged by their honour as well as by their interest. I am afraid that the resolutions now proposed are calculated rather to invite than to prevent an invasion; that they tend to frighten this country but not to frighten France. They proclaim to the enemy that till the new force which it is proposed to collect and to train is brought into action, that we are not in a proper state of defence, and thus point out the intermediate time as the proper period for making a successful attempt. But I am persuaded, as I have already said, that the plan now in agitation points to a very different object from that which is professed; that it is in contemplation of his Majesty's ministers to prolong the shocking and inhuman species of warfare, of extending our possessions in the West Indies, and that it is for this purpose that parliament are called upon to sanction those measures which it is pretended are dictated by the imperious necessity of the times, operating upon the safety and security of the country. Alas! it would shock the country if the horrid scenes of death and carnage—if the details of the mortality and desolation that have occurred in St. Domingo could be seen and known. Sir, I repeat it, that the invitation now held out to the country, is really, I fear, for the purpose of carrying on our ruinous schemes of territorial acquisitions and conquests in the West Indies. It is therefore with these apprehensions that I wish for something more of a pledge from his Majesty's ministers. I would have no delusion practised upon the country; I would have fair and manly dealing. If the carrying on of offensive operations in the West Indies be one of the objects for which this measure is to be adopted, I would have it plainly stated so. The right honourable gentleman conceives that a part of his project was treated with some levity; on a subject of such importance, and in such a situation of affairs, levity is not a feeling which I should think proper to indulge; but there certainly was a part of his project which excited in me a smile. The right honourable gentleman made use of a curious military argument. He says, that as the French, in the event of effecting a landing in this country, could not bring with them a large body of cavalry, it would be proper to raise a considerable force of regular and irregular cavalry, in order to act against their infantry.

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This is rather a curious argument. The right honourable gentleman does not mean to say, that if the enemy brought over nothing but cavalry, it would proper for us to meet them only with their infantry, and yet his argument is of much the same kind. But, however, I will not oppose the mode he proposes of raising the 20,000 cavalry; I have no objection to see the gentlemen who amuse themselves in Hyde-park take an active part in the operations of the war; not that I am blind to the inconvenience that will attend the execution of the plan—the mode of making the election of the tenth man to furnish the horse, &c. but the right hon. gentleman may be acquainted with the mode of *riding* and *tying*, and may remove those difficulties. There is another part of the measure to which I have a greater objection—I mean that part which relates to game-keepers. Why these men should be singled out I know not; they are dispersed through the country, and it will not be practicable to collect them easily together. Why, because they may be expert in killing a partridge, are we to suppose that they are better calculated to kill a Frenchman? besides, I know not that they have so much more general knowledge of the country than others. If the object of the right hon. gentleman is merely to get good marksmen, why does he not select the 'squires themselves? there are many gentlemen in this House whom I would back against any game-keeper in the kingdom; besides, the right hon. gentleman makes an attack upon those men that appears to me to be unwarrantable. He says, that game-keepers may give up their deputations, if they have any dislike to personal service. These men, many of whom have large families, would thus be placed in a situation either to serve or to relinquish the means by which they obtain their livelihood. These, sir, are the sentiments which I entertain upon the measure proposed. I enter not now into the details—I discuss not the particular operation. I have taken a view only of the outline as sketched by the right hon. gentleman. I see many difficulties, but in this choice of difficulties, I give at present my assent to the proposition.

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* said, I should have considered it unnecessary for me to say any thing upon the present occasion, had it not been for the explanation which the honourable gentleman has thought proper to demand from ministers. The honourable gentleman wishes some explanation from ministers, the effect of which demand, however, another part of his speech wholly removes. He calls for some information upon the subject of the invasion which has been announced

announced by the enemy, in addition to what his Majesty's speech contains, while at the same time he professes that he can place no confidence in their assurances. The honourable gentleman hopes too that the present parliament will not imitate the conduct pursued by that by which it was preceded. With regard to the present parliament it would speak for itself. Those, however, who witnessed the public spirited acts of the last parliament; its glorious exertions, by which this country and Europe had been rescued from destruction, must entertain the highest sentiments of respect for that parliament, and rank it with the most venerated parliaments this country had ever known. Those, who, with me, cherish these sentiments, I hope will one day endeavour to raise a substantial monument of our respect in which we hold that parliament. I hope, however, that this parliament will not take upon credit the account which the honourable gentleman is pleased to give. He imputes to me expressions which I do not recollect ever to have uttered. Though there is no person who is less qualified to repeat particular expressions than I am, or whose words merit less to be recorded, I am sure the honourable gentleman never heard me express with regard to the internal state of the country, any other sentiment than that measures should go hand in hand with the emergencies which called for them. Ministers have already stated, with all the responsibility which can attach to them, that a design had manifested itself in the enemy to invade this country, and I conceive that they would have been wanting in their duty to the public had they failed to call upon the force of the state to avert the danger or to disappoint the attempt. Whether the preparations that have been made will end in a descent upon this country it is impossible to decide. There are appearances of a disposition to make the attempt, which is sufficient to justify ministers for wishing to put the state in a posture of defence. I will not take upon me to determine whether the resolution of the enemy will be changed by the events which have lately taken place upon the continent, but I shall only say, that seeing what the enemy have already done, and the preparations they have made, it is prudent to adopt precautions, nor would ministers perform their duty if they neglected them. For my own part, I have no hesitation in giving it as my own private opinion, that upon these means depends whether the projected invasion will be carried into execution. By shewing that every thing has been done to secure our internal safety, we demonstrate to the enemy the ruin with which their enterprise must be attended,

tended, and induce them to abandon a design which presents no hope of success. Farther than this I cannot say, nor can I give any other information than that which has been communicated. The honourable gentleman seems to imagine that the number of cavalry should be determined by placing horse to horse, and man to man, with the enemy; but should the design of invasion be carried into execution, the cavalry, whether regular or irregular, would furnish the best means of harassing their march and impeding their progress; nor would it make the smallest difference, though the enemy were provided with no cavalry at all, for in case of such an event, our great safety would consist in being able to oppose them in this manner. The honourable gentleman says, that other military operations may be undertaken with the troops to be raised different from the purpose to which they were now proposed to be destined. If ministers, however, wished to undertake any military operations that were inconsistent with the interest of the nation, parliament might check their designs, and the honourable gentleman himself, if he could convince parliament of the impropriety of the conduct of administration. It cannot be expected, however, that I should say any thing upon this point. If the present negotiation should be unsuccessful, gentlemen cannot mean to say that this country should be tied up from offensive operation, and in the event of the prosecution of the war, our defence at home may depend upon the ability we possess to attack the enemy abroad. I think it therefore of essential importance to augment our regular force for the defence of these kingdoms, and, if necessary, to carry on the military operations, that circumstances may dictate against an enemy that has evinced the disposition to destroy our commerce, and to disturb our internal tranquillity.

Mr. Fox in substance said: in this stage of this business it does not appear to me to be the duty of any man to make an opposition to the measure proposed. Even in this stage of it however I have no difficulty in saying, that from the sense I have of the general plan, there are many parts of it to the adoption of which no eloquence is likely to reconcile me. The right hon. secretary of state, has been pleased to say in answer to the observations of my honourable friend, that although the French in case of an invasion may land no cavalry, yet it is proper that we should be provided with cavalry to oppose them. My honourable friend's observation did not call for this sort of answer. The right hon.

gentleman observes that at all events this country ought to make great preparations at home, and that he is satisfied, that if we should be under the necessity of going on with the war, these preparations may be very beneficial to us in many respects. I object to the generality of this sort of speaking, because it conveys to us no specific information, and is likely, from its being just in the abstract, to entrap some into an approbation of measures which may lead to consequences of which persons so approving are not aware. That if we are compelled to go on with war, great preparations will be necessary for us, is a truth which nobody disputes; but it is a truth which conveys to us no information. It is applicable to this war, was applicable to the last, and will be applicable to every war. The right honourable gentleman should have applied his reasoning a little closer; he should have come to the proposition which is now before the House. The question is this: is the proposition before us fit to be adopted under our present circumstances? If it be, then I say, that, for any evidence that appears before us, it was fit in 1756, was fit in 1778, fit in 1794, and has always been fit in every period in which this country has been engaged in war. But, for the whole necessity of the measure, we have only the authority of the king's ministers, on which I do not choose to rely. I should have been unwilling to rely, in the last war, on the authority of much better ministers than the present, and make that authority a foundation for such proposition as the present. It is not by the authority of ministers but by the striking exigency of a particular moment, that parliament are justified in adopting particular and extraordinary measures. I beg the committee will attend to this, and reflect on all that has been said upon it by the right honourable gentleman; they will then see that he has dealt in nothing but generality; which, if considered as proof, proves a great deal too much for the purpose of the right honourable gentleman, for it proves that this species of defence is applicable to this country in every war, since he has not distinguished the exigency of the present moment, from that or any other in which this country has had the misfortune to be engaged in war. This is one in addition to the very many instances which his Majesty's ministers have given of their great eloquence in urging general arguments without any specific applicability, in which they are eminently skilful, when it is their object to take money from the people, and to increase the power of the crown.

The right honourable gentleman has thought fit to pronounce

nounce a panegyric on the last parliament, and to recommend its conduct for the imitation of this. My opinion of the last parliament is, that it has done more mischief to the real well-fare of this country than any other that ever sat in it since a parliament was ever known or recognized in England; at least since parliament had any credit for attending to the interests of the people. To hold it up therefore as an object of imitation is enough to confound any man who feels for the principles of freedom; a parliament which has done more to destroy every thing that is dear to us, than in better days would have entered into the mind of any Englishman to attempt. Shew me a parliament in consequence of whose proceedings the people have been drained so much, and from which they have had so little benefit! Shew me a parliament since the year 1688, the æra of our revolution, that diminished the rights, the best, the dearest rights of the people, so shamelessly, so wickedly, as the last parliament have done! Shew me a parliament since that period that has so uniformly, so studiously sacrificed the liberty of the subject to encrease the influence of government, as the last parliament has done! to make it the subject of panegyrick; to state its proceedings to be such as to be worthy of imitation, is beyond endurance! Sir, I consider the last parliament as a curse to this country: the leading principle on which they acted was that which leads directly to complete despotism; unlimited confidence in the ministers of the crown; Shew me a parliament since the revolution, that has given such a confidence, and look at the effect of such practice. This is the only war that has ever been conducted on the part of this country, in which there never has been one inquiry on the part of parliament; you see to what state that has led you already; should this parliament be like the last (God in his mercy avert it), this country will soon be in a condition, in which it will be of little importance, whether they have a parliament or not. But for the conduct of the last parliament we should not have heard of the measure which is now proposed to us. I know I may be told that I often speak intemperately, and that I do so now, but I speak as I feel, and I think it is impossible for any man to feel more strongly than I do at the present situation of this country. Ministers tell us that the measure which they now propose is necessary to our safety. If it be so, it is their own conduct and the conduct of a confiding parliament, that has brought us into that situation. And what is the measure which they now propose? Why it is, in its nature, a requisition: an imitation of the system of

the French, against which so many vehement declamations were pronounced; against the principle, applying it to a settled state, justly; but as against the French, in their condition, in my opinion, improperly, or at least in too unqualified a manner. Ministers now tells us, however, that our situation is such as to call for this measure. Granting it to be so for the sake of the argument only, I would then ask; what has brought us into that situation? to this I answer, without the least difficulty, the confidence, the criminal confidence, of the last parliament. One inevitable effect of that confidence of parliament in the minister has been the want of the confidence of the people in the integrity of parliament. The right honourable gentleman says, "it is good to be prepared." Certainly it is so; but when he comes to us, and makes this requisition, it is incumbent on him to shew us the reason why we should be thus prepared. He should lay before us the ground on which he calls for that requisition. How stood the case in former periods of this war? In 1794 there was as much reason for such a measure as this, as there is now; there was then as much of a rumour of an invasion as there is now; and so the ministers told us at that time. The House upon the faith of the minister's assertion, agreed to measures of the most unconstitutional nature, to avert, as it was supposed, the impending danger. Such measures, although unconstitutional, were then thought to be necessary; and they were thought also to be sufficient to keep the French, from attempting the desperate measure of an invasion. Are the French now more likely to make that desperate attempt than they were then? Or are we not now in a better situation than we were then? I conceive that ministers themselves would answer these questions in a manner very consolatory to the people of this country. Such was our state in 1794. What is it now, and what the difference between them? Ministers now tell us that an intention has been manifested on the part of the enemy to invade these kingdoms. I am too much accustomed to notice the artifice of ministers to receive any very deep impression from what they say. Did they not say formerly what they say now, that the enemy had some intention of invading this country! Certainly they did, and they were intrusted with force sufficient to prevent that calamity. They had address enough to persuade the country of the necessity of the measure.

The right honourable gentleman who spoke last says, "I am of opinion that, as it may be necessary for this country to carry on an offensive war, this measure may be of great advantage, inasmuch as our forces may thereby be the better
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able to avail." To this as a general proposition, I do not object. It is true. But then I say to ministers, "Bring before us the facts on which you say this measure is necessary. What I object to is your duplicity. If you really want this force, and to the extent you say you do, shew me the reason for it, and I will grant it cheerfully. All I want is that you state to me your reasons. You did so when you called for the augmentation of the navy, and you had it; but do not ask any thing to carry on the war abroad under the mask of defending us at home; for in that case you are asking under a false title what under a real one the people of this country would not grant to you—to prevent an invasion at home, what they would refuse with indignation, if asked to carry on the war abroad." But, Sir, it seems we are to have the responsibility of ministers for the due application of the grant which they now call for. Look at the extent to which the principle of voting such extraordinary measures as this, upon the idea of responsibility, may lead you. By it you will introduce a practice that must deprive the people of all their rights and all their property. If it should turn out (not an extravagant hypothesis) that all this story about an invasion is a mere pretence to gain the consent of the people to the measure now proposed, and that the real object is extremely different, what then will become of the boasted responsibility of ministers? How are we to make them responsible? We may say, and say truly, that "the event happened there was no danger of an invasion when this measure was adopted." To which the ministers may answer, and be assured they will, "True, there was no invasion, but then it was owing to the very measures which we proposed, and you adopted, that the invasion was prevented." How, then, are we to make ministers responsible for what they do under such a measure as this? The idea of responsibility in such a case is perfectly ridiculous. Why, Sir, at this rate you may go on and do every thing that the minister may ask you, until you have totally destroyed the constitution; the principles have already been too much invaded by the measures of the present ministers. There are some inconveniences that necessarily arise out of a free constitution. I know that many authors of great eminence have pointed out those inconveniences. I do not deny it, although I have never seen them in so strong a light as the authors I allude to say they did; but the advantages resulting from a free constitution are so great, so numerous, and to me so clear, that I cannot patiently argue upon them, when they are put into a scale
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against the supposed advantages of a contrary form. Be that as it may in the opinions of others, I say, you cannot argue that subject in this House; for the people of this country have made their election—they have chosen a free government, and it is your duty to preserve it with all its inconveniences, if there be any that are worth mentioning. If, therefore when ministers, pretend an alarm, you are to give them whatever power they may ask for, when it is impossible you can attach any responsibility to them, as I have already proved in this case you cannot, why then you desert the point on which the people of this country have already made their election; and, instead of enjoying the blessings which your ancestors intended for you, you take what may appear to you, but what never appeared to me, the advantages of despotism. This would be a fraud upon the people of this country. I know the eloquence that has often been employed to shew, or attempting to shew, by a flourishing antithesis, that we possess all the advantages of a free government and those of a despotic monarchy, by possessing the wisdom which arises from a free discussion of the representatives of the people, and the promptitude and dispatch of an unlimited monarchy. Such an antithesis may answer the purpose of an ingenious orator, and aid him in the course of a florid declamation; but it can avail but little to any man who wishes for the safety of our constitution. I am of opinion, that our constitution, in its true spirit, cannot mix with any thing despotic. Have recourse to experience, the only unerring guide; read the history of this country, and then shew me what page it is that you have discovered how and when it was, that the maxims of a free government have been united with the principles of despotism. I know it cannot be done. I know also, that if you do not reflect on history, and take it as a lesson, you will return to your ancient distrust and jealousy of ministers whoever they may be. That you will examine minutely into their conduct. Reflect on the consequences of the contrary practice. You see now before you the effect of it. Confidence, in the first instance, renders confidence necessary in the second. Confidence in ministers induces to take measures which they cannot continue without further confidence; they are obliged to call for it in their own defence; in that career you may proceed until you have confided away the whole spirit of our constitution. I am afraid you have advanced upon that course much too far already. In my opinion the spirit of the constitution has been almost entirely set at rest for a time, by
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the measures of the last parliament. Let it be the practice; for it is the duty of the present to revive it. There was an expression in the speech of the right honorable gentleman to which I cannot help alluding. He said, "if the present negotiation should be unsuccessful, then the present measure will be advantageous to this country." No man wishes more heartily than I do it may be successful. I wish it from every motive that can actuate a man; but I am not sure the same feelings are entertained by his Majesty's ministers. I hope they are. I say this by way of caution, lest the world should suppose I am such a devotee to the present administration as to imagine that any negotiation in which they may fail, may render peace to this country totally unattainable. Notwithstanding there are many new members in this House, they know, I believe, enough of me and my opinion of this war to be well satisfied that I abhorred its commencement. That opinion remains completely unchanged; and whatever opinion the people may have upon the propriety of the measure which is now proposed for the defence of this island from an invasion, I trust this country will never relinquish the opinion that this war was in its principle and commencement unjust, unnecessary and diabolical. If it shall unhappily become our lot to defend ourselves against an invasion; ourselves we must defend; but whether the measure is more or less than we ought to agree to, or one that we ought to try, are questions of detail, and therefore to that detail, shall I defer them. I cannot, however, permit the particular parts of the measures to pass without taking notice of some of them. That part of the plan which refers to game-keepers appears to me to be a measure of violent injustice to a class of persons who, as far as the tax which they bear goes, already contribute pretty handsomely to the support of the state.

Another part of the plan I cannot pass by in silence:—The navy of this country is so much, and so justly, the favourite service of it, that no man is willing to find fault with it. I am the last man in this kingdom who would wish to do so, or to say any thing against any service that contributes to the greatness of this nation—such as I know the navy does. I feel, and I know I only feel in common with all my countrymen, gratitude to the navy; but the circumstance of impressing men, even into that service, great and valuable as it is, would not be a part which a judicious friend to it would select for the subject of his panegyric. I am not now arguing the policy of the practice, for great as the grievance may be
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to the individuals who are the objects of it, the discussion will be unseasonable until we shall find a better mode for providing for that service, and therefore upon that subject I shall say nothing. But upon the subject of forcing men into the land service the case is widely different—so much so, that I have never yet heard it defended in this country; and yet this measure seems to me to have that tendency, for out of the force which is proposed to be raised, there is to be a certain proportion for the naval, and a certain proportion for the land service. I cannot for one, conceive any danger to which this country, under all its circumstances, can be exposed, that would make me ready to assent to a measure that had for its object the impressing the subjects of this country into the land service. I cannot assent to any measure that has for its object the increase of the military force of this kingdom in that manner. This is entering into the very spirit of the French requisitions, which we decry so much. The Chancellor of the Exchequer says, that only one sixth part of them shall be exercised at a time, that is only 10,000. That they will not be called to the service but in case of actual exigency. Now are not these words (abating the difference between a speech and the authority of the legislature) the very words of the act of parliament with regard to the militia, which says, “unless in case of invasion or imminent danger thereof.” The consequence will be that the military force thus raised will be subject to military law. I wish to know whether it was the opinion of those who passed the act respecting the militia, that they should be subject to what they now submit? Certainly it was not, and as it has been found expedient to call upon them to conform to the rules which guide them now, it would have been more manly in parliament to alter the law in that particular. We are here told that the military force which is now proposed to be raised, is only to act in case of emergency. What is this to be? Until the French shall land upon our coast! No such thing, I know that such a restriction cannot, and ought not to be imposed upon executive governments; because you should repel the danger when you are threatened by it. Why then it will amount to this, that whenever ministers shall think fit to alledge there is danger, the whole of this military power to be intrusted to them for the internal defence of this country in case of invasion, will be entirely at their disposal. What security have we that no abuse will take place, respecting the application of this enormous force? What security have we that we are not now voting for a force,

force, said to be intended for one purpose, and which are really to be applied for a different use? What security have we for trusting that this great military force is not intended to supply the place of other troops, which are designed to be sent abroad? The right honourable gentleman alluded to the safety of these kingdoms, I do not chuse to follow him in that course, for I only speak of the safety of Great Britain, when I canvass the measure which is now before us. It is to that object, and to that only, that I intend it to be applied.

I know not what information ministers may have respecting the intention of the French to attempt an invasion of this country. I have none except what I derive from newspapers. I believe that the idea of an invasion is as visionary as that of succeeding in it. I believe the French have no such intention, for they have a government which is likely to be much better informed of the disposition of the people and the situation of the country, than to be led to any hopes of success in such an attempt, therefore do I believe they will not be guilty of the rashness to risk it. But supposing they had such desperate intentions—supposing they should attempt to carry them into execution, I have no doubt of the issue. My hopes upon that subject are as sanguine as those of any other man in this country. But what should we do in the mean time? What is the duty of this House at this moment? To cherish the spirit of freedom in this country, restore to them that for which their ancestors have bled. Make the ministers really responsible. Let their parliament not be confiding in the servants of the crown, but watchful and jealous of the exercise of their power. Restore to them the right of popular discussion. Allow them to state freely the grievances they feel; repeal those laws which have forbidden the exercise of their most invaluable rights. In one word, instead of amusing them with panegyrics upon the form, allow them to possess the spirit of the old constitution of England: then will you indeed see the energy of the people of England, and then you will have no occasion for adding to your internal military force, for then even an invasion would never be formidable. These are your real resources; the rest are all imaginary. I shall give no opposition to the plan that is now before you in its present stage. But I think it fair to say some of the parts of it are such as, in the detail, I shall think it my duty to oppose.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* replied as follows: After what has already been said by my right hon. friend, I enter-

tain some doubts whether I ought to detain the committee one moment from the unanimous vote which I believe will be given upon the present occasion; I am sure, at least, that it will not be necessary to consume much of your time by replying at length to the short observations of the honourable gentleman (Mr. Sheridan) or to the more detailed remarks in which he has been followed by the right hon. gentleman (Mr. Fox) upon the same side, as I cannot but regard the declaration with which they prefaced and concluded their animadversions, that they did not mean to oppose the resolutions which I had the honour to propose, as a sufficient answer to the arguments by which it was accompanied. If the right hon. gentleman feels that the declarations of ministers upon the subject, which constitutes the foundation of the present deliberations, do not go beyond the length which is sufficient to justify the measures which are to be grounded upon it, if he considers their assurances of their representations entitled to no confidence, if he is persuaded that there exists no danger of invasion, against which it is intended to provide, if he is convinced that the object of the preparations that are to be made, are destined to carry on other warlike operations than the plan avows, or are employed as pretexts to cover designs of ambition or of encroachment at home, if he believes that they are intended to prosecute that object of the war which he thinks proper to qualify as unjust and diabolical, I would ask, how he can reconcile these principles with the conduct he is pursue, or as a publick man, upon what publick ground he can rest that assent which he has bestowed upon the measures which have been suggested? But while the right hon. gentleman indulged in these animadversions, he knew well that the precautions were demanded by the country as measures of self-defence, from which he could not withhold his concurrence; he demonstrated by his actions, that he was in reality sensible that the present was not, like other wars, undertaken to maintain a point of national honour, or to defend a disputed interest, to support an ally that was attacked, or to guard against remote or doubtful dangers, but that it was the first war in which a great and free people, in the prosecution of their commerce and the enjoyment of their prosperity, were called upon for a time to defend the sources from which they flowed; and in compliance with the good faith which was due to their allies, and, urged by a sense of common danger, found themselves compelled to oppose unprovoked aggression, and resist principles hostile to the government

government and constitution of these kingdoms and to every regular government in Europe. Why did not the right hon. gentleman follow up his principles by opposing likewise the measures which were proposed to meet this danger, but because he believed that the situation of affairs is such as to require these precautions, and because he must know that a false security could alone present the smallest chance of success in the attempt which had been threatened, because also he knew that such was the character of the enemy with whom we had to contend, that they were not so liable to be deterred by the desperate nature of the enterprise, or by a consideration of the number of persons whom its ruin might devote to destruction? Such, I am convinced, were the feelings of the right honourable gentleman upon this occasion, and such are the considerations by which his conduct is explained, although, perhaps, he found it necessary to colour his assent, and to disguise his conviction, by the invectives he introduced against the last parliament, and against the conduct of administration. Though, however, much he had reprobated the system and the measures of administration, though he had accused the justice and vilified the character of the former parliament, he could not trust the natural conclusion of his own premises. He did not ask if any of the new members who had so lately come up impregnated with the sense of their electors, or if the old members, who were witnesses of the proceedings, and whose recollection of the last parliament was so recent, would agree with him in the character which he had ascribed to it? Nor did he venture to make any appeal to ascertain who were those who would concur with him in asserting the principles he had professed! While I reflect upon these circumstances, I feel that confidence that it will not be incumbent upon me to answer at much length the arguments of the hon. gentlemen upon the other side of the House, especially when the objections of the one are answered by the observations adduced by the other. While the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) professed to agree with every sentiment of his honourable friend (Mr. Sheridan), they materially overthrew each other's reasonings, and every sentence uttered by the right honourable gentleman was confuted by that which preceded it. The internal order of battle seems to have been completely deranged, and the arguments of the honourable gentlemen themselves meet in hostile encounter. The honourable gentleman (Mr. Sheridan) wished to impose upon ministers a

responsibility for the measures which were founded upon the assertion in his majesty's speech, because, continued he, this matter rests only upon the information of the speech from the throne, which I must consider as the speech of ministers, and in order to supply the defect of this responsibility which attaches to ministers by the most solemn and formal declaration, the honourable gentleman insists upon receiving satisfaction and imposing responsibility by a communication less formal and less authentic! The right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) however proceeded as if ministers were pleading on their responsibility, and then concluded by maintaining that there is no responsibility at all. The right honourable gentleman is likewise offended with the general argument of the necessity of precaution, which was employed by my right honourable friend (Mr. Dundas), but his honourable friend beside him (Mr. Sheridan) admits, that only general information was to be expected, so that to this argument the right honourable gentleman must lift up his hand, and express his disapprobation, as he professes that he cannot act upon general information. Why, says he, did not the danger, which you at this time apprehend, induce you to demand the adoption of those measures of precaution which you now think it necessary to employ, neither were such plans pursued in any former period; the right honourable gentleman too went out of his way to find comparisons to depreciate the characters of ministers, and asserted, that to such measures as these much better ministers, in former wars, never found it necessary to resort. He does not, however, mention who these much better ministers are, and if the right honourable gentleman recollects the language he employed during the seven last years of the American war, there was a time when he bestowed upon the conduct of that administration, epithets as offensive, as *unjust* and *diabolical*. Why, exclaims the honourable gentleman, did you not call for these measures upon former occasions? Are we then gravely deliberating upon a great and important subject, and are we to be told that in certain given circumstances no precautions are to be taken because at a former period such measures were not required? May not then the means which were judged adequate in a particular situation, be found insufficient when circumstances alter or when danger is increased? The honourable gentlemen, though in other points their arguments were at variance, go on together contending that my honourable friend had said, on a former occasion, that the force which this country possessed, was sufficient to repel the attacks of all Europe.

Europe. Certainly I do not believe that my honourable friend ever asserted, that in any possible case, the volunteer corps would be sufficient for the defence of the country. If my honourable friend had asserted that the spirit by which these volunteer associations were dictated, put in action as circumstances required, and accommodated to the pressure of danger, would be able to resist the efforts of the whole House of Bourbon, or of the republic of France, aided by any particular branch of the House of Bourbon, or of any other combination of powers progressively; such an opinion I believe to be just, and at least perfectly consonant to the well known firmness and zeal of my honourable friend. But may not however the relative situation of the enemy present them with more specific means of carrying their purpose into execution, than they possessed at any former period, when it was necessary to guard against the dangers which then threatened? The right honourable gentleman says, you relied on the firmness and attachment of the people two years ago, and is it less now, that you have recourse to extraordinary precautions? The attachment and loyalty of the people of this country, I trust, has experienced no diminution. It lives, and is cherished by that constitution which, notwithstanding the assertions of the right honourable gentleman, still remains entire. Under the protection and support which it derives from the acts passed by the last parliament, the constitution inspires the steady affection of the people, and is still felt to be worth defending with every drop of our blood. The voice of the country proclaims that it continues to deserve and receive their support. Fortified by laws, in perfect unison with its principles and with its practice, and fitted to the emergencies by which they were occasioned, it still possesses that just esteem and admiration of the people, which will induce them faithfully to defend it against the designs of domestic foes, and the attempts of their foreign enemies. The right honourable gentleman discovers the extent of the adversity into which he represents the country to be fallen, in some of the measures now proposed for its defence, and which he reprobates by the name of requisitions, a species of levy, however, which so long as it was practised in France, he had not considered deserving of any particular disapprobation. I will not, at this moment, enquire whether requisitions in France were a right and proper measure; but let not the right hon. gentleman at once maintain that the attachment of the people renders these measures of defence superfluous, and in the next moment represent these precautions

cautions as proofs of the intolerable pitch of adversity to which the nation is reduced. The situation in which we are placed does not imply a suspicion of our power, though it justifies our precautions. That prosperity is deceitful and dangerous if it lead to a false security, that the danger, though groundlessly apprehended, or falsely exaggerated without exertion on our part, can alone be of doubtful issue or perilous consequence, is the real opinion which the contemplation of the state of the country is fitted to inspire. The right honourable gentleman, when he expressed his dislike of the mode of pressing men for the public service did not specifically apply his objection to the plan of augmenting the militia, and raising the new supplies of cavalry; he admits that these may in some measure come under the description of personal force. The mode proposed of encreasing the militia is not new in its principle. They are to be balloted in the same manner as the established militia of the country. The 60,000 men which it was proposed to add were to be formed precisely as the 90,000 of which the ordinary number consists. The present addition does not exceed the amount, for which, on former occasions, it was thought necessary to provide. In 1756 a bill passed for doubling the number. The right honourable gentleman, however, in pressing his argument, runs before his recollection. The 15,000 men for the land and sea service are to be raised according to the provisions of the act passed two years ago upon this subject. Does the right hon. gentleman then consider this to be pressing? No, it is meant to raise volunteers by contribution among the inhabitants of each parish, and, if they failed to produce the number at which they were rated, they were to pay a certain sum over the sum at which a person to serve could be procured. If the right honourable gentleman reprobates this mode as pressing, what was the language he held upon another occasion, and when a different mode was pursued? In 1794, when voluntary offers of service were introduced for the defence of the country, this mode was reprobated as repugnant to the constitution, and now when men are called upon to contribute their property and their personal service to the defence of their country, it is discovered to be unjust and stigmatized as requisition. The two honourable gentlemen admit the necessity of precaution, and they reprobate every measure which is proposed, and while they agree that it is necessary to provide for the defence of the state, they are dissatisfied with the means by which security is to be obtained. Notwithstanding the unanimity with which the resolution

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will be voted, I cannot augur well for the future co-operation which the measures may obtain, when I consider the sentiments which the honourable gentlemen entertain, and the observations with which their present concurrence is accompanied.

Mr. Fox rose to explain. The right honourable the Chancellor of the Exchequer had, he observed, made ample use of the first and grand rule in oratory, in taking whatever advantage he could of what might be conceived to be the weak side of his opponent. The right honourable gentleman seemed to be astonished that he should agree with him by giving no opposition that evening by vote, and yet should make a speech in every respect hostile to the measures of ministers. In this respect, however, the right honourable gentleman founded his argument on a complete misinterpretation of his meaning, for it went upon the idea that his not opposing his vote to the *present* resolution, was giving his unqualified assent to the measures proposed. That was by no means the stage in which members were called upon to give their sentiments fully upon the question; one would in this respect imagine the right honourable gentleman was affecting the ignorance of a new member of parliament! He seemed entirely to have forgotten, or wished on the present occasion to forget, that according to the forms of parliament any member might bring forward his opposition to a measure at any period of its discussion that he might think proper. The right honourable gentleman also from a fortunate and accommodating deficiency of memory, had even forgot his own first speech during the present evening, for in that speech he had observed, that the present business was mere matter of form, and that before any serious determination took place, it was necessary to have a week's deliberation at least. He, for his part, was surely not inclined to be more forward than necessary in advancing any schemes of the present ministry, and was the last man who should refuse his assent to giving as much time as possible previous to a decision. The arguments of the right honourable gentleman in many other respects had been equally fallacious. He said, that his honourable friend (Mr. Sheridan) had called only for general assertions, as to the danger at present apprehended, and that he (Mr. Fox) was completely dissatisfied on account of the generality of the answer; but in this there was no inconsistency, for although it might be true that greater danger actually did exist at present than at any former period, yet additional arguments were certainly necessary to prove this.

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The right honourable gentleman (Mr. Dundas) had given no individual pledge for his belief of the existence of this additional danger, but had merely harangued on the general propriety of being in a state of defence. He begged leave, therefore, to repeat that general arguments as to the propriety and necessity of defence were no answer on the present occasion. Did the right honourable secretary, when he talked in such very high language on a former occasion, consider an invasion as probable a circumstance as at present? Why did he not then propose measures similar to the present? or why did he assert that the measures then adopted were perfectly sufficient for every purpose of security? The right honourable gentleman had been pleased to exercise his wit upon the expression he had made use of when he spoke of former ministers being better than the present; as to the wars previous to the American war, no objections would probably be made to this assertion. As to the American war he had always maintained it was unjust and disgraceful, but because it was so unjust and disgraceful, was that any reason that the present war was not worse; or because the ministers, who conducted the American war, conducted it improperly, was that any reason why the measures of the present ministry should not be more exceptionable? In his opinion, indeed, the situation of the country then was prosperity when compared with the present; and with strict truth, (continued Mr. Fox), may I, relatively speaking, call the present moment the moment of adversity. When measures of this nature, different from any that have ever been proposed at any former period, are thus brought forward, these very measures are a proof of the adversity of our country; the enormous increase of taxes laid on to support these measures in a proof of horrible adversity! our relative situation to the other powers of Europe, and, above all, the surrender which has been made of our most valuable constitutional rights and privileges are irresistibly convincing proofs of adversity. After all, sir, (he continued) I apprehend no danger from invasion: the danger I deprecate, is from the obstinate prosecution of this war which cannot fail to be attended with the ruin of our credit, our commerce, and our free constitution. The right honourable gentleman opposite to me affects to smile at my saying that the constitution has been impaired, he certainly thought so himself at one time; but since he came into power he has never thought of repairing it. He triumphs in the idea, that notwithstanding the number of new members introduced into this parliament, I do not seem inclined to appeal to them
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by demanding a vote on the present occasion; I remember the time, only the last Parliament but one, when that right hon. gentleman was in the habit of saying, that calling for the vote of this House according to the representation of that period, was not taking the sense of the boroughs, cities and counties of Great Britain; but of Bengal, Bahar and Orissa. The system of representation continues the same, I cannot imagine by what magic the right honourable gentleman has on the present occasion procured a return of members who he sincerely supposes to speak the sentiments of the nation. I am next accused of inconsistency, because I say the constitution is impaired, and yet allow that the people are so fond of it, that no danger is to be apprehended from invasion; if this be inconsistency, I plead guilty; I do think the constitution is impaired; but I am not on that account to be obliged on every occasion to vote even against the minister who has impaired it, much less am I to say that I would not fight against the French. I do not as yet despair of the constitution of this country: notwithstanding all the insults that have been offered to it, and all the injuries it has sustained, I would rather look to the country itself, to parliament, or even to ministers themselves for a remedy, than to invasion. The honourable gentleman says, that I have this evening called this an unjust war in more distinct terms than I have used at any former period; but I appeal to all, who have honoured what I have said with attention, either within or without doors, whether upon this subject I have ever used any management of expression. When it has been asserted that France was the aggressor, I have denied it, because from whatever quarter might come the first act of hostility, those are the aggressors who refuse to enter into a treaty or pacific negotiation upon any terms. I am accused too of traducing the country when I reprobate the measures of ministers, under the idea that the country has given them its sanction; very different were the right honourable gentleman's sentiments at a former period. When I uniformly pronounced the American war, and all the measures by which it was carried on, to be unjust and diabolical, when I reprobated the conduct of ministers, while they persisted in their pernicious plans, I was not accused by that right honourable gentleman of traducing the country; now that he himself is in power, I should be glad to know what has identified him with the country, what has made him and the country so inseparable, that I cannot reprobate the one without traducing the other? This is undoubtedly not

the time fully to discuss the policy of the war; but I must take the opportunity of again saying, that properly speaking, they commenced hostilities who rejected all means of a safe and honourable negotiation. I do not deny that one moment may be more favourable than another for negotiation; but I certainly cannot conceive what a negotiation with any nation, shall at one moment be inimical to universal order and civilization, and immediately after, when the same nation becomes more successful and victorious than ever, that negotiation shall become adviseable. I have called this war unjust, because previous to actual hostilities taking place every thing possible ought to have been done to avert it. In this I conceive myself to be supported by all established authorities on the subject. It has always been laid down as a maxim, that an outrage being committed, is not of itself a sufficient justification of war; it is also necessary that there should be a positive refusal of indemnification, and they who stop the means of pacific discussion, act unjustly and become the real aggressors. The right honourable gentleman has animadverted on what fell from my honourable friend on this measure being taken from the example of France: this is certainly no place for a discussion upon the internal government of France. I wish indeed we had heard less of it from the other side of the House, but if the French went so far as to establish a system of requisition, they may truly be said to have had necessity for their justification. It was indeed something like a manifestation of an intention to penetrate into France, when the Duke of Brunswick was within an hundred miles of the capital, proclaiming ruin and destruction wherever he went, and with the determination to re-establish the worst of all governments, the old despotism of France; are we placed in similar circumstances, are we now called upon to make similar exertions? The right honourable gentleman has commented on the two Bills that passed during the last parliament, and he has said that ninety-nine in a hundred give them their approbation; my enquiries have indeed led me to a very different conclusion, and after the numerous petitions that were presented on that occasion, and other circumstances which took place, it is hardly decent in ministers to bring forward such an assertion. The right honourable gentleman says that those Bills produced peace and tranquility, and were absolutely necessary against whom? these few insignificant malcontents! this trifling hundredth part of the community? The argument is certainly inconsistent with the reasons used to induce the House to pass those Bills;

Bills; for we were then told that though indeed it was a minority of the kingdom, who were to be restrained, it was a large minority, a minority of considerable consequence! But I demand farther—have these Bills produced persuasion among the people? Have they created affection to the constitution, or to the present administration? Or, have they merely prevented the free expression of opinions, and for a while drowned discontent? If the latter be the case, concealed discontents is certainly no evidence of strength. I believe too, that, on the occasion of passing these bills, the meetings which were held up as the ostensible cause were much traduced, and that very few indeed or those who attended them were enemies to the constitution; and that, even among them, many strong arms would have been found ready to resist hostile invasion. I again say, that, upon the present opening of the business, I do not approve of the present measures. Yet I do not assert, that circumstances cannot exist which might render additional means of defence necessary; but I know well, that we already have a great army, and that a sufficient part of that army might be in this country to repel every attempt at invasion. The right honourable gentleman is amused at my honourable friend being dissatisfied with his majesty's speech, which, as connected with responsibility, may, in parliamentary proceedings be called the speech of ministers, and at the same time demanding additional satisfaction from ministers themselves, in whom he has no confidence whatever; as I understood my honourable friend, what he found fault with was the obscurity of expression in his majesty's speech; he consequently demanded a more explicit declaration of the grounds on which ministers brought forward the present resolutions.

The right honourable gentleman has also triumphantly observed some difference of opinion between my honourable friend and me, and conceived that there is a want of discipline on this side of the House. I certainly, without reluctance, leave to him all the advantages which he can derive from accuracy of discipline; while I claim for myself and my friends the free and unlimited exercise of thought, speech, and action. The right honourable gentleman has held up the last parliament as an example to the present. I have already given my sentiments respecting that parliament, and only desire any man with unbiassed judgment to look at their proceedings for the purpose of forming an opinion: what was the conduct of that parliament independent of many circumstances, which he has lightly enu-

merated? Would the right honourable gentleman hold out the Russian armament as a measure worthy of imitation? That parliament, which held forth demands and threats at one time against that empire, and afterwards sanctioned the retraction of the minister. A parliament that has plunged this country in a war, which had already added one hundred millions to the debt of the nation, with the loss of almost all our allies: in that parliament the king of Sardinia was held up as a pattern of an ally (I do not bring this forward at present for the purpose of personal reflexions against the unfortunate, but to hold out a warning to the present parliament and to the country at large). The king of Sardinia, by confiding in the ministers of this kingdom, has been reduced to a state of positive ruin. Those allies only who have abandoned them and their measures may be said to be in a state of existence; and, if the present parliament and their representatives continue the same blind, implicit confidence, ruin to us also must inevitably be the consequence.

Sir *William Pulteney* said, he did not imagine that any objection could be made to the country being placed in a respectable state of defence. He thought that an addition of sixty thousand to the militia was too small, and that the present was merely a half measure. As to the probability of an invasion, those who were in the secret certainly knew best, and as arms were to be put into the hands of country gentlemen by this measure, and not of regular officers, instead of increasing the power of the crown, he conceived it was arming the country against the crown. He agreed on the necessity of being prepared and only lamented that that the measure was not more extensive.

General *Tarleton* observed, that there were already above one hundred thousand effective men in the country for its defence, consisting of about twenty thousand regular cavalry, near sixty thousand yeomanry, and twenty thousand cavalry of other descriptions. This he thought perfectly sufficient for every present or probable purpose of defence. After contradicting the Chancellor of the Exchequer's statement of the number of militia embodied in the year 1756, which the general stated at that time to be sixty seven thousand, and taking notice of the violation of the militia act, which was passed in the 26th year of the present king, he concluded with remarking that the present measure was objectionable on account of its taking so many men from the employments of industry, of its extending martial law, and being upon the whole altogether unnecessary.

Mr.

Mr. *Elford* (member for Plymouth) said, I rise, sir, to make an observation or two on certain expressions used by a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) opposite to me. In doing this I know I shall experience considerable embarrassment, because I am not only unused to speak in publick, but this is the first time I have had the honour of a seat in any parliament. However, the animadversions of the right honourable gentleman, on the conduct and motives of gentlemen on this side the House, were such as have affected me too sensibly to be passed over in silence. The right honourable gentleman seems to think that those who vote with ministers, are dependent and servile; but I can safely aver that I am as independent of the favour or the rewards of ministers as any gentleman, be he who he may, on his side of the House. Making this declaration, I shall, perhaps, be credited when I assure the House, that in any opposition I may be induced to give to any measure, or the support I shall this night give to ministers, I have no motive but the good of the country. With regard to the two sedition Bills, a great majority of the country has been, ere this, reconciled to their expediency. I have myself had much intercourse with the inhabitants of one of the most extensive counties of England. They are unanimous in their approbation of the measures. It is true petitions against them were at first industriously proposed for their signature, and every effort of calumny and misrepresentation employed to gain their concurrence; but if any thing like concurrence was at one time obtained, that concurrence was the effect of misrepresentations the most gross and inflammatory. They were told that if the Bills passed into law, they dare not even meet to spend their evenings agreeably at each other's houses, without a magistrate to watch and report their conversation: they were told their most valuable rights and privileges had been invaded, and that their utter extinction and subversion would be procured by those Bills. They were told, in short, that their lives would be endangered by the operation of such laws. But how have the Bills after all this operated? They have preserved the tranquillity of the country, and introduced that subordination, which without them could not be expected from a factious tribe of revolutionary doctors. That they have been thus salutary, is obvious. Hence the remedy was judiciously adapted to the disease. With these sentiments, I give my most cordial assent to the proposition now before the House.

Mr. *Fox* rose again to explain, and said, however the honourable gentleman may have felt and expressed his own independence,

dependence, nothing that could fall from him upon such a subject would have induced me a gain to address myself to you; but he has alluded, in positive terms, to Bills which I ever have detested and ever will detest. As a young member, perhaps a greater degree of modesty should have belonged to him. His assertions are delivered with an air of superiority. Sir, I do not doubt the gentleman's intercourse with the country to be extensive; but I very much suspect that he has not sufficiently attended to the proceedings of which he has so positively spoken. That some degree of misrepresentation might have accompanied the petitions in certain villages I can easily suppose, but what publick measure of any importance has not suffered by misrepresentation: perhaps too the misrepresentations of which the honourable gentleman complains, were no other than certain clauses which were in the original Bills, but were rejected and thrown out by the committee. Those clauses had been much commented upon in the course of the early discussions on the subject in general, and certainly it is within the recollection of gentlemen that the clauses themselves had for their object the subjecting private families to the domiciliary visits of the magistrates. Every family, consisting of twelve or more persons, was to be made the object of the penalties of that law. However, the clauses did not survive the committee in which their absurdity and despotism had been detected and exposed. Even supposing the honourable gentleman correct in his statement, gentlemen will readily perceive that those circumstances might have given rise to all the misrepresentation which accompanied the invitation to efforts against the Bills themselves. At any rate, the unbought unprejudiced sense of a great majority of the inhabitants of the metropolis has been decidedly against them. And surely such opposition was at least of as much importance as the approbation of the honourable gentleman's county associates. I have myself the honour of representing a very populous city, and its inhabitants are almost unanimous in their determination to give every possible aid to procure a repeal to them. Of these Bills, it was said by ministers, that the operation of their principle was meant to influence future popular meetings. By this they did not mean that all future meetings should be prohibited, but that they should by the salutary nature of this law, be rendered less liable to abuse. There are many who have always thought and still think the Bills unnecessary. Those who do, are in fact the great majority of the trading part of the community. To obtain their repeal, these will,

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I am convinced, exert legal means. Nor is the period far distant, when their energies and their authority will be united for that purpose. Never, sir, will I hear the quiet of the country ascribed to Bills which have wounded the constitution without having the assertion explained. And it surely might have occurred to the honourable gentleman, that misrepresentations were employed as much, at least, by those with whom he acts, as by their opponents. Undoubtedly sir, I think that misrepresentations as gross, with abundantly as much opportunity to effect a change of sentiments, were upon that occasion employed by his Majesty's ministers. Remembering that the constitution for which our ancestors struggled and bled, has been more deeply wounded by the acts of the present ministry, and especially by the apostates from the standard of liberty, I cannot sit down without telling the people of England and this house, that however reiterated and daring may be the future attacks upon their legitimate rights, I will never abandon the standard of liberty but with my life.

Mr. Curwen said, agreeing as I do in every sentiment of opposition to the present war, and unwilling to take any thing on the credit of ministers, I cannot silently give my assent to the introduction of a Bill, the necessity of which has been in no respect proved. Had ministers shewn that the state of the country is such as requires the measure, I am sure no man would more cordially go the full length to give them every confidence which the urgency and importance of such a measure might demand. But the danger has not even been avowed. They have shrunk by low and paltry invasions from that sort of inquiry which honest men would have gloried in courting. One honourable gentleman has called the measure a half measure, but had he known the distressed situation of the country, had he looked, not to the beginning of the war, but to the present moment, he would have deplored the necessity for continuing to support the present military establishment, much more that additional one proposed. But these, sir, are topics which rarely occur to men avowedly devoted to all the measures and all the arrangements of ministers. Of this class I have the happiness not to be one. As a member of the British senate, as an admirer of our laws, as a lover of freedom I shall always resist the aggressions of power. Sir, I shall not on this subject be merely satisfied with the *dictum* of a minister; something of higher authority than his assertions will, I trust, be laid before the committee. For it is in
such

such a case alone that this momentous question can be rightly discussed. I expect we shall have clear proofs of danger exhibited in every picture that shall be henceforth drawn of this "manifested disposition to invade our isle." Such alarms as have already been excited, and excited they have been with success where raised by ministers, and the sanction of them procured by those very means which their honourable friend, the new member, has deprecated, even by misrepresentation. I once, indeed, thought that no minister durst so openly insult this House and the nation as to create that monstrous and expensive fiction. But they have themselves hitherto been the makers of national dangers;—dangers, too, which have taken some hold even of the throne. They have poisoned the ears of Majesty not only with these false alarms, but by foully representing the people as possessing neither affection for their sovereign, nor attachment to the constitution. A time however must come, when even the people will have an opportunity of spurning with honest indignation the authors of their sufferings; when the sovereign must know the sentiments of his people, and the people, convince their oppressors that although they have borne the scourge for some time, they will not bear it any longer.

Mr. Serjeant *Adair* could not pass over altogether in silence what had fallen from Mr. Fox relative to the operation of the two Bills. Mr. Fox had said, that if the Bills had repressed popular meetings they had restrained liberty, but this he denied, for what sort of popular meetings were the Bills levelled against? Those only which disseminated treason, anarchy and sedition. This was his conviction, and much as he esteemed the right honourable gentleman, the name of apostate or any other appellation, should not deter him from openly expressing his opinion.

Sir *Gregory Page Turner*, in a speech of considerable length, professed much and zealous concern for the country, under the apprehensions of the avowed hostile intentions of the enemy. To the principles of the British constitution, Sir *Gregory* said he had sworn fealty. He had done this in consequence of the advice and example of a much respected father, and he should instill the same sentiments of love and veneration into the breasts of his own children. He was willing that it should be understood that he had a considerable stake in the country. But when he said this, he did not mean to insinuate, that that was at all the prevailing motive of his present conduct. He should, without hesitation, take
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up arms himself in defence of the constitution and the country, and was ready to make an adequate sacrifice for their preservation and independence.

The first resolution was agreed to.

The second resolution, respecting the augmentation of the militia, to be trained in the manner therein directed, and enabling his Majesty to cause the same to be embodied, in case of necessity for the defence of these kingdoms; and that Mr. *Mitford*, Mr. *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, Mr. *Secretary Dundas*, Mr. *Secretary at War*, Mr. *Attorney General*, and Mr. *Solicitor General*, do prepare, and bring in the same.

The third resolution for enabling his Majesty to raise a provisional force of cavalry, and to require the military service of persons therein described, to be embodied in case of necessity, for the defence of these kingdoms; and that Mr. *Mitford*, Mr. *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, Mr. *Secretary Dundas*, Mr. *Secretary at War*, Mr. *Attorney General*, and Mr. *Solicitor General*, do prepare and bring in the same.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 19.

The *Earl of Derby* presented a petition from the *Earl of Lauderdale*, complaining of the undue election and return of the *Earl of Errol*, as one of the sixteen peers of Scotland. The petition stated the holding of the election pursuant to his Majesty's writ, that by the act of union, subsequently confirmed by an act of parliament in 1707, the sixteen peers are to be chosen by the peers of Scotland out of their own body; and all those who are nominated by them, shall be returned to the House of Lords in England. That the petitioner was one of those nominated at the said election, and as such ought to have been returned; but that the two principal clerks of session had made the return without mentioning his name. That at the time of the election, the petitioner had objected to the election, or return of the *Earl of Errol*, on the ground that the said *Earl of Errol* is not a peer of Scotland: notwithstanding which objection, the said *Earl of Errol* had been returned by the said clerks authorized to make the return. The petitioner offers to prove at the bar of their lordships House, all the allegations contained in the petition; and claims such relief, as to their lordships may seem just and meet.

The Earl of Derby moved that the petition do lie on the table.—Ordered.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, Oct. 19.

Mr. *John Pitt* moved for leave to bring in a Bill for the naturalization of George Aston.—Leave granted.

A petition was presented from Thomas Blake Howel, Esq. against the election for the borough of Cirencester, in the county of Gloucester, which was ordered to be taken into consideration on Tuesday, the 20th of December.

The House agreed to resolve itself into a committee the next day, to consider farther of that clause of his Majesty's speech which respects an invasion.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* brought up a Bill for enabling his Majesty to raise a certain number of men from the different counties in England, and from the shires, stewarts, towns, and boroughs of Scotland, for the service of the army and navy, which was read a first time and ordered to be read a second time the next day.

In a committee of ways and means the annual land and malt duties were voted for the ensuing year.

General *Tarleton* desired to be informed, whether the Bill brought in by the *Chancellor of the Exchequer* was intended to be printed before it was committed?

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that it was his wish that the Bill should be read a second time, that it should then be committed, and the blanks filled up, after which it should be printed, and recommitted for discussion on Friday se'nnight.

Mr. *Curwen* suggested, that though he was no advocate for delay, it might be desirable that members of Parliament should be in possession of the opinion of their constituents upon the Bill, and that this could not be obtained from the distant quarters of the country against so early a period as Friday se'nnight.

Mr. *Plomer* was for deferring the discussion of the Bill till Monday se'nnight, which was agreed to by Mr. Pitt.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* gave notice that on Friday se'nnight, in a committee of the whole House, he would suggest some propositions respecting the unfunded debt.

Adjourned.

HOUSE

HOUSE OF LORDS,

THURSDAY, OCT. 20.

Their lordships met and without doing any business adjourned till next day.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, OCT. 20.

The *Speaker* reminded the House that this was the last day for presenting petitions complaining of undue elections.

The following additional petitions were then presented from places whence petitions had come already.

Milbourn Port—To be taken into consideration on the same day as the former petition.

From Cirencester—To be taken into consideration on the day appointed for the former petition.

From Leominster—to be taken into consideration in the same manner.

The following new ones were presented.

Tregony in Cornwall—to be taken into consideration on the 10th of November next.

From the county of Kent—To be taken into consideration on the 22d of December.

From the county of Sterling—To be taken into consideration on the 27th of December.

From the Borough of Maidstone—To be taken into consideration on the 29th of December.

From the city of Worcester—to be taken into consideration on the 3d of January next.

Mr. *Hobart* brought up the report of the committee of ways and means, by which the annual duties upon the land and malt were voted.

The resolutions were read, agreed to, and Bills were ordered to be brought in upon them.

Mr. *Serjeant Adair* brought up a Bill for the further relief of the quakers, as far as regards the imprisonment of their persons for non-payment of tythes in certain cases, and for making their affirmation evidence in criminal as well as in civil cases.

The Bill was read a first time, ordered to be read a second time on Thursday next, and to be printed.

The Bill for raising a certain number of men for the use of his Majesty's army and navy, was read a second time, and ordered to be committed to a committee of the whole House the next day.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* brought up the Bill for the augmentation of the militia; read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time the next day.

Deferred to Monday next the committee of the whole House on that part of the King's speech which relates to an intention to make a descent on this kingdom.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, Oct. 21.

NEW PEER.

Lord *Stewart*, of Castle Stewart, in the county of Inverness (the Earl of Moray,) was introduced in the usual form between the Earls of Kinnoul and Galloway (Lord Hay and Stewart of Garlies,) and took the oaths and his seat.

EARL OF LAUDERDALE'S PETITION.

The *Earl of Derby* moved, that the petition presented on behalf of the Earl of Lauderdale, be referred to a committee of privileges. Ordered.

That no peer be allowed to vote by proxy. Ordered.

That the Earl of Lauderdale be heard by his counsel before the said committee, and that the Earl of Errol be heard in the same manner, if he pleases. Ordered.

That the said petitioner do lay before the said committee a printed state of his case. Ordered.

That the Attorney General and the Lord Advocate of Scotland be ordered to attend the said committee. Ordered.

Adjourned till Monday.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, October 21.

The *Speaker* informed the house, that he had received a letter from Major-general James Nugent, stating that he had been returned to serve in parliament, for the borough of Saint Mawes, in the county of Cornwall, and also for the borough of Buckingham, and that he had made his election for Buck-
ingham.

ingham. A new writ was therefore ordered to be issued for another member to be chosen for Saint Mawes.

Sir *Charles Morgan* had been returned for the county of Monmouth, and for the town of Brecon; he made his election for the county of Monmouth. A new writ was therefore ordered for another member for Brecon.

A new writ was ordered for Westbury, in the room of George Ellis, esq. who made his election for Seaford.

A new writ for Wareham, in the room of Charles Ellis, esq. he having chosen Seaford.

A new writ was ordered for the city of Hereford, in the room of John Scudamore, esq. deceased.

A new writ was also ordered for the borough of Stamford, in the room of Sir George Howard, deceased.

Another for the county of Flint, in the room of Sir Roger Mostyn, deceased.

Another for the city of Peterborough, in the room of Richard Benyon, esq. deceased.

Another for the borough of Yarmouth, in the room of lord Charles Townshend and Stephen Howe, esq. deceased.

The annual land and malt bills were read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Monday.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, in pursuance of what he had thrown out upon a former day, rose to submit to the house a motion, "That the House should take into consideration none of the petitions complaining of undue elections that were appointed to be taken into consideration after the 10th of November, before the recess," which was agreed to unanimously.

The bill for raising a certain number of men in England and Scotland for the land and sea service, was ordered to be taken into consideration in a committee of the whole House on Monday.

ARMY ESTIMATES.

The order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a committee of supply being read, the secretary at war moved that the estimates presented on a former day should be referred to this committee.

The house having resolved itself into a committee of supply,

The *Secretary at war* rose and said, that there were certain other papers relative to the army, which had not been laid before the committee, the reason of which was, that they were prepared at the war office from other departments, but
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had not yet been made out. These, however, were not very material, as they related to objects, the expences of which underwent very little variation; those on the table contained all that was necessary to enable the committee to judge of the army expences for this year. As it would be recollected that a diminution in the number of troops on the establishment had taken place last year, from which a saving of 800,000*l.* arose, it would not be expected that any considerable diminution would take place in the amount of the present estimates. The whole force of this country, consisting of the common distribution of guards and garrisons, and colonies and plantations, amounted to 195,674 men, the expence of which would amount to 5,190,000*l.* so that it would appear that the expence of this year would not exceed that of the last, but would fall short of it in the sum of 168,426*l.* The home army and the army abroad were to be understood by the general division of guards and garrisons, and colonies and plantations. The home army contained all the troops which might be considered as serving for the defence of the country, guards, regulars of every description, and fencibles. The army at home amounted to 60,765 men, from which arose an excess above last year of 11,546 men. The army abroad, or the troops in the colonies and plantations, it was well known, comprehended the troops in the West Indies, in Corsica, Gibraltar, Canada, Nova Scotia, and every foreign service, except those in the East Indies, which came under a separate description, amounted to 64,276 men; of course there was a diminution of about 13,641 men on this head since last year, and upon the whole force a trifling diminution. The army abroad was composed entirely of regulars; the army at home of regulars, invalids, militia, and fencibles. The militia was nearly the same as last year, with the difference of the city regiments. There was a small augmentation of the invalids from the circumstance of calling upon and drafting the out-pensioners, who were capable of performing this species of duty. Upon the fencibles there had been a diminution of troops in each regiment, which had occasioned a corresponding difference in their amount since last year. As the other articles were of a nature that were less exposed to variation, he should not enter into any particulars of their amount, but should proceed to move his first resolution, "That there be employed for the land service of this year the number of 195,000 men."

General Tarleton said, he had expected that the honourable secretary at war would have gone more into detail. Only
twelve

twelve articles were stated in the accounts and estimates of the war department for the present year, whereas those of last year contained nineteen articles. Last year the number of troops in pay amounted only to 119,000. The expences of the present year were stated for these troops at five millions and upwards. Considering the disproportion between these statements, surely a house of commons ought to be watchful over the acts of ministers, but especially a new parliament. —He should add the result of the articles omitted, amounting to 580,000*l.* to the sum of the estimates of this year, arising from the articles on the table. He was happy that at a period such as this, at a period when alarms were abroad, and fears of invasion entertained, that we had such a force as 60,000 men at home, and that the army in the colonies amounted to so large a body. With regard to the troops in the East Indies, he conceived that the expence of them should be defrayed by the East India company. There was an article of 360,000*l.* stated as the charge for the recruiting service, a charge which he conceived must be superfluous, when ministers, upon the alarm of invasion, which they held out, were to abandon our old mode of raising men by beat of drum, and have recourse to the mode of requisition, for the troops that were to be raised. Of the militia he could never speak but with the highest respect, as the best constitutional defence which could be employed. There were, however, certain abuses which had crept into this service which he should just mention, and he believed, when they were understood by the right honourable gentleman, they would speedily be redressed. The officers of the militia, by employing each a servant, considerably diminished the number of men who performed duty, as each of these persons who were considered as officers servants were exempted. This was particularly inimical to the true interests of the country, and afforded obstructions to his majesty's service. Bat-men, he said, were a description of men who were taken out of the ranks, to serve the officers of a regiment in menial capacities. In making these selections, the lot was always made to fall on the most deserving among the privates: they were, indeed, those most distinguished for honesty, sobriety, and personal accomplishments, that were adopted for those services. Thus the very men who ought, above all others, to be kept and cherished in a regiment, were detached from it. The serjeants, too, had been converted to purposes foreign from the nature of their office. Not fewer than nineteen had been made musicians. This he considered as having music at too great a price, and

as an expence quite unnecessary. It appeared that a reduction in the fencibles had now taken place, and he was glad that the advice which last year had been given from his side of the house to adopt this measure, had at last been slowly taken up and acted upon by ministers. It was nevertheless worthy remark, that this reduction had been made at a time when the country was, according to ministers, threatened with an invasion. If the extraordinaries, such as barracks, ordnance, &c. were added, the whole expence of the army this year would not fall short of its amount last year. There was a fact which was of the utmost importance, well deserving of the consideration of the house of commons, and especially of a new parliament, that he could not help mentioning: last year the expence of the army amounted to the full amount of the revenue of this country, of the year previous to the war. If the army cost so much, how were the other expences of the government to be defrayed? With these facts in our recollection, surely the idea of raising such an additional force as 103,000 men, without the existence of danger being even remotely proved, ought to be abandoned. Nor indeed can the expence be maintained or endured. The right honourable gentleman, in stating the amount of the army establishment, had not given any particulars of its application. His majesty's speech, however, had directed their attention to the achievements which had been performed by our troops in different parts of the world. Where then were the instances in which the courage and conduct of our troops had been displayed? In looking round, it appeared rather that borrowed from our allies, than conquered from the enemy. These, no doubt, would be kept in the best condition in order to be restored. They might be supposed to weigh something in a negotiation; but he hoped they would not be allowed to impede the conclusion of a peace. Where then had these troops been employed? His majesty's speech formerly had held out great promises of exertions in the West Indies, and the exploits which had been achieved in that quarter had been considerably extolled. He did not think, however, that there was much subject of boast. The armaments which had been equipped for expeditions to the West Indies had been attended with enormous expence. What was the reason that the full advantage which it might have been expected to produce had not been obtained? Had the fleet failed too late in the season, or did the fault lie at the door of ministers? Whether we looked at the general state of the West Indies or at particular islands, there

there was not much room for satisfaction or exultation. The Caribs in St. Vincent's were still in a state of insurrection. The troubles in Guadaloupe, and various other islands, still interrupted and destroyed the industry of the inhabitants. Victor Hugues had not been dislodged, nor his operations disconcerted. In St. Domingo, the melancholy ravage which had been committed by disease afforded no satisfaction in the review. Was the attempt to reduce this island to be prosecuted at the expence of so many gallant and brave men? Almost every person in that house and in the country had to lament the loss of their friends, brought to an untimely grave by the dreadful mortality which swept every thing before it. If we considered the extent of the armament, there was something surely faulty in the plan, or why was there so little obtained for so much expence, and so many sacrifices? Enquiries had been demanded upon this subject, but enquiry was continually resisted. Gentlemen were even told to confide in ministers, as if it had not been the duty of parliament to enquire into the conduct of the executive government. Such was the language that was held out to the new parliament by gentlemen on the other side. Enquiry was the duty of the House of Commons. It could not be refused by a good minister, because it tended to demonstrate the wisdom of his conduct, and it could only be refused by those who were afraid to submit their measures to the test of examination. Upon this point, however, he should not go farther at present, but should content himself with what he had already stated.

Colonel *Sloane* said, that the militia were upon the same footing as regular troops, with regard to the servants kept by the officers, and that this was an allowance perfectly understood to be consistent with the establishment.

General *Tarleton* said, it was true that officers were sometimes allowed to have a servant who was exempted from duty, but the difference between a good and a bad regiment consisted in the number of men taken out of the ranks, and exempted from duty. In the 16th light dragoons, in which he had served, none were allowed. In the militia, the officers were chiefly men of fortune, who were able to provide themselves with servants in a different manner, and at such a time as this, to take 50 or 60 men from the ranks, was certainly no inconsiderable inconvenience.

Colonel *Sloane* said, that in the regiment of militia to which he belonged, the servants of officers were called upon to perform all the details of a field day.

Mr. *Fazakerly* said, that in all the troops with which he was acquainted, the Austrians, Prussians, &c. the allowance of one or more servants, according to the rank of the officer, was made, nor had they any other duty but that of guarding the baggage. He understood that the mortality among our troops in the West Indies had ceased, and there were now 18,000 healthy troops in the islands.

General *Tarleton* explained.

Mr. *Hussey* desired to know what was the number of effective men among the 195,000 contained in the resolution?

The *Secretary at war* replied, that he was not prepared to give any answer to the question.

Mr. *Fox* said, he had heard it alledged that the engagement made on the part of this country with the Maroons, had not been faithfully adhered to. He understood this to be the declared opinion of an officer, with whom he had not the honour of being personally acquainted, but of whose military talents and private worth he had a high opinion, from what he had frequently heard of him. That officer had been in a situation which enabled him to judge of the circumstance to which he alluded; and therefore the opinion of such a person had great weight with him. The committee would easily conceive that he alluded to Colonel Walpole. This was, however, nothing but a report, and his chief object for alluding to it was, to learn what credit it deserved.

Mr. *Bryan Edwards**.—Not having had the honour of a seat in this House until the present parliament, it may appear very presumptuous in me to expect the attention of the committee on the present occasion, but being perfectly well acquainted with the subject to which the right hon. gentleman alludes, I beg the indulgence of the committee while I state a short history of the Maroon negroes—the cause of the late war between those people and the inhabitants of Jamaica, and the conduct of the colonial assembly in the termination of the business.

The Maroon negroes, sir, are the descendants of the Spanish negroes, who, when the island surrendered to the English in 1655, took to the woods. You will find in Thurlow's state papers an account of them, which was transmitted to government by general Venables. He relates "that it was impossible to come to any treaty with them, that they were wild and lawless savages, who had no moral sense, and on whom neither persuasions nor gentleness could make any im-

* Member for Grampond, and author of the history of the West Indies.

pression."

pression." They were therefore left in possession of the interior country and continued masters of it for near a century; murdering without mercy all such white persons as attempted to make any settlements near them, not sparing even the women and children. In the year 1739, governor Trelawny after a long and bloody war, entered into a treaty with them, granting them security and freedom on certain conditions, and compelling them to reside in towns or villages apart from the negroes in servitude. In the year 1760 I became acquainted with these people, and I soon observed that they were suspicious allies, and would, some time or other, become very formidable enemies. Yet it is not true, as was stated in this House, that the inhabitants of Jamaica wished to get rid of them. The inhabitants, in general, conceived the highest opinion of their utility, and treated them with the utmost kindness; they never asked a favour of government or the assembly that was refused them. Concerning the origin of the late war, the case was this: two of the Maroons having been guilty of a felony in the town of Montego Bay, by stealing from a poor man two of his pigs, were tried according to law, and according to the very letter of their treaty, and sentenced to receive a few lashes at the cart's tail. The sentence was mild, and the punishment not severe; but the whole body of the Trelawney town Maroons, in revenge for the indignity offered to two of their number, immediately took to arms, and soon afterwards actually proceeded to set fire to the plantations. Sir, I shall not take up the time of the House by a long detail of military transactions. The gallant officer whom the right hon. gentleman named, (Col. Walpole) had undoubtedly the merit, under the judicious orders of the earl of Balcarres, of putting an end to this most unnatural and unprovoked rebellion; and if those two distinguished persons differed in opinion concerning the terms and conditions on which the Maroons surrendered, it is exceedingly to be lamented. They both deserved equally well of the community and the country at large. Such, however, I am sorry to say was the fact, and the governor therefore very properly left the whole to the determination of the assembly. Sir, the first conditions on which the Maroons were to surrender, were these; 1st, That they should on a day appointed give up their arms and surrender all the fugitive enslaved negroes who had joined them. 2d, That they should ask the king's pardon on their knees. On these terms their lives were to be spared, and permission granted them to remain in the country. Now, sir, it is a fact not to be de-

nied that they *did not* then, surrender on the day fixed, and that they *did not*, then, or on any day afterwards, give up the fugitive negroes. I do not believe that Colonel Walpole avers that they did. Colonel Walpole, sir, who is not less distinguished for his humanity than his bravery, thinks, I believe, that it would have been geuerous in the assembly to have imputed their not surrendering in time to their ignorance, rather than to any wilful delay; and politic to have let them remain in the country; but I do not conceive that he charges either the earl of Balcarres or the assembly with treachery. The assembly, however, thought differently from Colonel Walpole, and that men who had violated their allegiance, and entered into a bloody and cruel war, without provocation, murdering without scruple helpless women and infants at the breast, were unfit to remain in the island; yet, in the disposal of these people, they manifested a degree of generosity and tendernefs which is without example. Sir, after providing them with fit and proper cloathing for a change of climate, the assembly sent them to North America, and appointed three gentlemen to accompany them thither with a sum of 25,000*l.* to purchase lands for their future settlement, and for their maintenance for the first year, after which it is hoped from the example of the white people, with whom they are settled, and being removed from the former wild and savage way of life, they may become in time a useful body of yeomanry. I will only add one word more. Sir, there is now a gentleman in this town, who conversed with the Maroons the night before they sailed, and who assures me that they expressed themselves well satisfied with the conduct of the assembly towards them, and declared that having conversed with some American negroes concerning the country to which they were going, they said they were content to go. I hope therefore we shall hear no more of the business.

Mr. *Wilberforce* said, he did not know any thing of the origin of the war with the Maroons, but he could not help observing that the Maroons had no representatives in that House, the planters had very able ones. It was now above a century since they were under our dominion, he feared that proper care had not been taken to improve their morals and to instruct them in the principles of the Christian religion; if they had, he had no doubt that long ere this they would have cast off that savageness which was imputed to them, for brutality was the effect of ignorance.

Mr. *Edwards* complained, that after the right hon. gentleman (Mr. Fox) had advanced a charge of breach of faith,
and

and he had answered that charge, he found another objection should be started against the conduct of the Jamaica planters of quite a different nature. Now they are accused of not instructing the Maroons in religion, and initiating them in the habits of civilized life. When objections were started upon speculative grounds, there was no end to them. Were he called upon to deliver his own private opinion upon the subject he would perhaps disapprove of the mode that was adopted in the first instance of confining the Maroons to separate communities. But situated as they were in this respect, they spoke a language of their own, and of course being in general unacquainted with the language of the island, they were not capable of benefiting from the common means of instruction, a circumstance which, of itself, was a sufficient reply to the objection of the honourable gentleman.

Mr. Edwards added, that of late years the Maroons had been frequently invited to settle in the towns, and every encouragement offered to them, but they would never listen to any invitation, nor be allured by any encouragement which could be held forth. He was sorry to find that the honourable gentleman (Mr. Wilberforce) entertained ideas, and indulged himself in the formation of plans totally inconsistent with human nature, and the present condition of man, some of which Mr. Edwards placed in a very ludicrous light, but recollecting himself apologized to the committee for treating so serious a subject with unbecoming levity.

Mr. Fox was extremely glad that he had said the few words, that he did upon the late transactions with the maroons, as it had given rise to the explanation of the honourable gentleman (Mr. Edwards,) and from the facts which had been adduced, he would not accuse the government of Jamaica of keeping bad faith with the maroons, more than he would accuse Shylock, in the Merchant of Venice, of a breach of contract; it appeared that they had adhered strictly to the letter of their engagement; but, however, it was a fit subject for parliamentary investigation, since from what had been said, it was evident that Colonel Walpole thought either that the treaty was not kept, or that it was too strictly kept; and, because the honourable gentleman differed in opinion from that officer, it did not follow that he was right and the Colonel was wrong. He hoped therefore, that they would have some farther account from the ministers, either on this or on a future day; and that Colonel Walpole's opinion,

nion, which was certainly of great importance, should be fairly stated to the House. The hon. gentleman had declared that the maroons were sent away with great attention; and that they would form a useful body of yeomanry in another quarter of his Majesty's dominions. He agreed with him, that the most likely way to render them useful, was to remove them from scenes of cruelty and the sight of slavery. He maintained that transportation was what they were extremely averse to, and that the government had sent them to North America, in violation of the treaty which it had formed with them. He hoped that the subject would come before the House on a future day, and that ministers would be prepared to vindicate the propriety of the measures which they had countenanced.

The resolutions were then put separately and carried *nem. con.*

The following were the precise sums voted—

For charge of 60,765 effective men for Guards and Gar-	
rifons	£.1,505.905 10
For forces in the p'antations	1,411,231 19 5
For difference between British and Irish pay of forces for ser-	
v'ice abroad	40,096 9 9
For recruiting regiments in India	13,335 18 0
For contingencies for land forces	360,000 0 0
For charge of general and staff officers	94,195 14 0
For charge of embodied militia and fencible infantry	950,441 3 6
For contingencies for ditto	210,000 0 0
For clothing for ditto	112,811 0 0
For charge of fencible cavalry	397,734 4 2
For allowances to ditto	95,000 0 0

The House being resumed, the report was ordered to be received on Monday.

The supplemental Militia Bill was read a second time, committed, the report received, and referred for further consideration till Monday se'nnight. In the interval the Bill was ordered to be printed.

Mr. Ryder moved that the act of last session for regulating the importation and exportation of corn be read, which being done, he moved that the House resolve itself into a committee to consider the said act on Monday next. Ordered.

Adjourned till Monday.

HOUSE

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, *October 24.*

New writs were ordered for the boroughs of Gatton and Ashburton, for the election of Burgesses to serve in Parliament in the room of Sir W. Heathcote and Lawrence Palk, Esq. who have been doubly returned.

The *Speaker* acquainted the House that Norman McLeod, Esq. who petitioned against the election of Melbourne Port, and Peter Botham, Esq. who petitioned against the election for Guildford, had not entered their recognizance upon the said petitions conformably to act of parliament.

The orders for hearing the said petitions were discharged.

The malt duty Bill, and the land tax Bill were each read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

The report of the committee of supply was brought up, and the resolutions were agreed to by the House.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* moved for leave to bring in the annual mutiny Bill; leave was given.

The Bill for raising a force of irregular cavalry, was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time to-morrow.

Mr. *Sturt* moved, that the following papers be laid before the House: an account of the navy and victualling Bills which had been registered from the 31st of December, 1795, to the 1st of October, 1796; an account of all the Bills issued for the transport service, from the 31st of December, to the 1st of October, 1796; an account of the money received upon the lottery, for 1796; an account of the money issued upon the land and malt taxes for 1796; an account of the sums received upon the vote of credit for 1796; an account of the sums advanced by the Bank of England for the public service since the 31st of December, 1795, and outstanding on the 1st of October, 1796.

The papers were ordered to be made out.

CORN.

In a committee of the whole House upon the act of last session of parliament, for regulating the importation and exportation of corn.

Mr. *Ryder* said that it was his intention to move for the continuation of that act, as the state of the country, with respect to provisions, was not materially different this season from what it was last. The act now under the consideration of the committee, consisted of three parts. permitting the importation, and prohibiting the exportation of corn, and permit-

permitting the importation of every article of provision. He should propose that this act should be continued with the addition of two clauses, providing that the act may be repealed in the course of the present session, if parliament deem it expedient, and permitting the King and council to suspend its operations, if it should appear to them to be proper when parliament is not sitting. He moved, that the Chairman of the committee be desired to move the House, for leave to bring in a Bill for this purpose.

The House being resumed—

Mr. *Hobart* moved for leave to bring in the Bill. Leave was given.

Mr. *Ryder* moved, That the act of his present Majesty, permitting the importation of raw silk, &c. be taken into consideration in a committee of the whole House to-morrow. Ordered.

The committee of supply and of ways and means were deferred till Wednesday.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, *October 25.*

The royal assent was given by commission to a naturalization bill.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, *October 25.*

The *Speaker* informed the House that William Rightson, Esq. who had presented a petition, complaining of an undue return for the borough of Downton, had not entered into recognizance as the act of parliament required in such cases; and therefore the order made for taking his petition into consideration was discharged.

The petition of the freeholders of the borough, complaining of the return, was ordered to be taken into consideration on the 10th of November next.

The House, in a committee, directed their chairman to move for leave to bring in a Bill to continue for a time to be limited, the importation of organzine thrown silk and flax, and flax seed in any ship or vessel from any port at amity with his Majesty. The motion being made leave was given.

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The Bill was afterwards brought in, read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time.

The Bill for the annual duty on malt passed the committee of the whole House, and the report was ordered to be received the next day.

LAND TAX.

The Land Tax Bill was also committed to a committee of the whole House.

Mr. *Ryse* stated that this Bill was the same as that of the last and former years with one exception, and that was with regard to the conduct of the assessors. Upon that subject he should propose a clause, requiring that the assessors should take a certain oath, that they would enquire into the real annual value of all lands, &c. of which they were assessors, and would without favour or affection, prejudice or malice, assess every person charged with land tax, in a fair, impartial, and equal manner, according to such value, &c. He proposed this on account of there having been many complaints made of partiality in the assessors. This was a measure not at all of a public concern any further than regarded the due performance of duty in the assessors of the land tax. An oath to this effect was administered to the assessors of all the other assessed taxes.

This clause was brought up and made part of the Bill, which then passed the committee, and the report was ordered to be received the next day.

SUPPLEMENTARY MILITIA.

A Bill for raising a certain number of men in the several counties of the kingdom for the service of the army and navy passed the committee of the whole House. The report was received immediately, and ordered to be taken into consideration on Monday next, and the Bill was ordered to be printed.

The Bill for increasing the militia, &c, for the defence of the kingdom, was read a second time, and ordered to be committed to a committee of the whole House immediately.

Mr. *Rose* moved, that it be an instruction to the committee, that they have power to make provision in the Bill for enrolling in the militia all persons who are gamekeepers.

Mr. *Folliffe* enquired whether all gamekeepers are to be included in this provision?

Mr. *Rose* said, it certainly was proposed that all persons who had deputations for keeping game should be enrolled in case of necessity, unless they should at a given day give up their deputations; but they should not be called upon unless the militia should be embodied.

Mr. *Jolliffe* said, he was not in the House when this subject was opened by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and therefore he wished for information. By this measure, as he understood it, all gamekeepers who have deputations, shall either be no gamekeepers at all, or become militia-men. This was a power that went to the total annihilation of all gamekeepers.

Mr. *Rose* said, they would not be called upon unless in case of actual invasion, and then they ought to serve.

Mr. *Jolliffe* said, this appeared to him to be a very strong measure. As to the idea of their not being called upon unless in case of actual invasion, to this was to be added, the apprehension of an invasion; this was to be judged of by those who chused to call out the militia. When these regiments were called out, were the gamekeepers at all events to be enrolled, or give up their deputations?

Mr. *Rose* said, that when the bill came to be discussed, the clauses might be canvassed. His idea was, that whenever there should be occasion for the service of the militia; in all such cases these gamekeepers should be called out.

Mr. *Jolliffe* said, he certainly must oppose such a measure.

The question was then put, carried without a division, and the House went immediately into a committee of the whole House upon the bill.

Mr. *Rose* brought up the bill respecting gamekeepers. He said he meant to affect only gamekeepers who were really and actually serving as such; for that gentlemen taking out their licence to sport shall have power to find a substitute, they shall be at liberty to find a marksman, to be approved of by the lord lieutenant. It was not intended that gentlemen should at all events actually serve. The time at which gamekeepers are to make their election, whether they will be liable to be thus called upon, or give up their deputation, was proposed to be the 23d of November.

The clause being read,

Mr. *Jolliffe* observed, though there was to be an exception in the clause in favour of gentlemen, as had been stated, should it take place, the measure still appeared to him to be very hard. Every person who held the office of a gamekeeper must give up his employment altogether, perhaps his only bread, or become at once a militia man. We approached to requisitions much too frequently of late. This was nearly allied to the nature of a French requisition.

Mr. *Rose* said, that these gamekeepers could only be called out when the militia shall be called out. That would not depend

depend upon the Lords Lieutenant, but upon his Majesty. The provision respecting permission to gentlemen to find substitutes, he admitted was not yet in the bill, but it should be introduced before the bill went through. Gentlemen should certainly not be compelled to serve in person; clergymen, and many others holding deputations, could not be in a condition to serve in person, they should therefore provide substitutes to be approved of by the Lords Lieutenant.

The question being put, and the committee being about to divide,

Mr. *Rose* observed, that as this subject had been brought on by his right honourable friend, and as it had been understood the whole of it was to be discussed on a future day, he hoped the committee would be spared the trouble of dividing in that stage of the business.

Mr. *Jolliffe* said, that if he thought he could succeed in stopping the measure altogether, he certainly would divide the committee, but as he had no such hope, he should not then press it.

The clause was then read, made part of the bill, which was then passed the committee, and the report was ordered to be received the next day.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, Oct. 26.

Heard counsel in an appeal from Scotland, in which John Smart Tenant, in Craighill, was appellant, and the honourable Walter Ogilvy respondent; after which the interlocutor was affirmed, and the respondent allowed 100l. costs.

Received some private Petitions, and adjourned to Friday.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, Oct. 26.

The *Speaker* announced that Mr. *J. Cierk Jervoise* and Mr. *Rushworth*, who had been returned for Newport in the Isle of Wight and for Yarmouth, had made their election for Yarmouth.

R. 2

A motion

A motion was made, "that the Speaker do issue his writ for a new election, in the room of the above gentlemen." Ordered.

The *Speaker* said, that as the consideration of the Carmarthen petition came to be considered the next day he should take the Chair precisely at half past three, and count the House precisely at four.

An account of the mode in which the supplies of the year 1796 were applied, was laid before the House, and ordered to be printed.

Colonel *Gascoigne* presented a petition from the Mayor, Aldermen and Common Council of Liverpool, setting forth the inconveniences arising from the practice of seamen employed in ships trading to the West Indies refusing to return with their ships, and then exacting extraordinary and exorbitant wages for the run home, a circumstance particularly experienced in time of war, and praying that a Bill should be brought in this session of parliament to remedy the evil complained of, and to prevent the exaction of exorbitant wages. The petition was ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. *Hobart* brought up the report of the malt tax Bill; which was read and agreed to with the amendments.

The report of the land tax Bill was brought up.

Mr. *Rose* said, that having understood that the clause which had been added to the Bill the preceding day, which related to the oath to be taken by the assessors was exceptionable, as it might be considered as having the object of directing the conduct of the assessors in the assessment of the tax, he should move that the clause should be entirely withdrawn. As the sum granted was to be raised, it was not an object with government to prescribe the proportion in which it was to be levied. The Bill therefore would be entirely the same as that of the preceding year. The clause was withdrawn.

SUPPLEMENTARY MILITIA.

The report of the Bill for the increase of the militia was brought up.

Mr. *Rose* moved, that the Bill should be recommitted, and the House resolved itself into the committee.

Mr. *Rose* said, he should move a clause to be introduced into the Bill to enable persons having taking out game-keepers certificates, who were possessed of property to the amount of 50l. a year by themselves or wives, or who were heirs apparent to 100l. a year to employ substitutes. The clause

clause was agreed to, and the House being resumed, the report was brought up, and ordered to be taken further into consideration on Monday, and to be printed.

The committee of supply and of ways and means was postponed till Friday.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, *October 27.*

A new writ was ordered for the town of Haslemere, in the county of Surry, in the room of James Lowther, esq. who has made his election for the county of Westmoreland.

The land and malt tax bills were read a third time, passed, and ordered to be carried to the lords.

Mr. *Rose* moved, That there be laid before the House an account of the total quantity of corn imported into this country since the commencement of the act for that purpose, to the 10th of October, 1796, together with the amount of the bounties actually paid thereon.

Ordered.

The account was laid upon the table immediately and ordered to be printed.

Mr. *Rose* then moved, That there be laid before the House an account of all the bounties paid to seamen in Great Britain, from the 10th of October, 1795, to the 10th of October, 1796.

Ordered, and laid upon the table immediately.

Mr. Serjeant *Adair* moved that the Quakers bill be read a second time the next day.

Ordered.

The following is a list of the names of the committee ballotted to try the merits of the last election for the county of the borough of Carmarthen.

JOHN SMYTHE, esq. Chairman.

J. Palk, esq.

S. R. Gaussen, esq.

W. Egerton, esq.

N. Vansittart, esq.

J. Bond, esq.

J. H. Walpole, esq.

P. Tyrwhitt, esq.

H. Peters, esq.

J. H. Addington, esq.

R. Burdon, esq.

J. Fane, esq.

H. Banks, esq.

The hon. *SL. ANDREW ST. JOHN*, Nominee for the petitioners.

WILLIAM BAKER, esq. Nominee for the sitting members.

The House then adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, *October 28.*

A person from the Exchequer presented at the bar the papers moved for by Mr. Sturt on a former evening, which were brought up and ordered to lie upon the table.

Mr. *Scot* moved, that there be laid upon the table an account of all the receipts and payments of the East India company in England, from the 1st of March, 1796, to the 1st of March, 1797, to be continued by estimate from the 1st of October, 1796, to the 1st of October, 1797.

Ordered.

The bill for regulating the importation and exportation of corn, was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Monday.

ELECTION BALLOT.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* reminded the House, that there were two election petitions ordered to heard on Tuesday, and as they had barely a sufficient number of members the preceding day to form one committee, he was of opinion that it would be expedient to order a call of the House for Tuesday, which would ensure the attendance of a sufficient number of members, without probably rendering it necessary to enforce the call.

The House was ordered to be called over on Tuesday next.

Mr. *Abbot* gave notice, that on Monday next he will move for a committee for the purpose of considering of a more effectual mode of promulgating the statutes.

The bill for permitting the importation of organized thrown silk, &c. in neutral bottoms from states in amity with his Majesty, passed through a committee of the whole House, and the report was ordered to be received on Monday.

NAVY AND EXCHEQUER BILLS.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* moved, That there be laid before the House an account of navy, victualling and transport bills, registered from the 1st of October, 1795, to the 1st of October, 1796, with the interest due thereon.

Ordered.

Likewise, that there be laid before the House an estimate of the navy debt on the 30th of September 1796.

Ordered.

Both

Both the accounts were immediately produced, and ordered to be referred to the committee of supply. The account of exchequer bills was also referred to the said committee.

FUNDING OF NAVY AND EXCHEQUER BILLS.

The order of the day being moved for a committee of supply, and the motion being made that the speaker do now leave the chair, the House accordingly resolved itself into the said committee, Mr. Hobart in the chair.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* rose to make his promised motion with respect to funding the navy and exchequer bills. He said the proposition I now wish to submit to the committee is calculated in its operation to remove out of the market a large mass of floating debt, which in consequence of having fallen to a considerable discount, tends in its present state materially to injure the public credit, to obstruct the intercourse of commerce, and impede the sources of the national prosperity. Such a measure must appear in itself so desirable, that I flatter myself it will require but few words from me to enforce its propriety, and that its beneficial tendency will on the first view command the general assent and approbation of the House. The committee will recollect that at the commencement of this war regulations were adopted that navy bills, which had before been issued for an indefinite period, should become payable at the expiration of fifteen months, bearing in the mean time an interest of 4 per cent. In consequence of this new arrangement it is evident that there must now be a certain proportion of the outstanding navy bills, payable at different periods, at the end of each month, and that all of those must be payable either in 1797, or early in the next year. Such being the case, the only question now is, Whether we shall leave this immense mass of bills to encumber the market, to obstruct the private intercourse of commerce, and to clog the wheels of general prosperity, or whether we shall offer such fair and equitable terms to the holders of these bills, as they may be induced to accept, and as at the same time will produce a great and important advantage to the public? The extent of bills issued for the former year were submitted to the House in the budget of last year, as existing debt, and provision was then made for defraying the rate of interest. I also calculated a sum of four millions, in order to meet the increase of debt, which might be contracted during the ensuing year. The amount of the debt actually incurred has, however, from various causes, many of them unforeseen, very far exceeded my

my supposed estimate. When I come to state the ways and means for the year, it will be incumbent upon me to explain what measures I mean to take, in order to defray this increase of debt. This, however, is an entirely different subject of discussion. It is now my business to state what is the whole extent of the navy bills at present outstanding. If, as I propose, we shall adopt the measure to fund them down to the latest period, the whole number of navy bills amount to a sum very little less than 12 millions, of which the earliest are due within a month, and the latest at a period of 15 months. As they become due at periods thus disproportionate, it is reasonable to divide them into different classes, and to offer different terms to the respective holders, calculated according to the time at which the bills are payable. In adopting a measure for this purpose, we are to consider that we are giving to the holders funds which are immediately disposable for money according to the rate at which they stand in the market in lieu of bills subject to a certain discount, and at the same time bearing an interest of four *per cent*. In adjusting therefore the amount of the *bonus* to be given, the point we have to consider is, the difference between the value of those bills, thus burdened with a discount, and drawing an interest, and the value of those funds which we transfer to the respective holders. The next question is, What are the most proper funds to which to apply on this occasion? On consulting with those gentlemen likely to be best informed on this subject, I have found they were of opinion that it would occasion too heavy a pressure on one particular fund, if such a large mass of bills were all to be funded in the usual way in the five *per cents*. It was proper to present a suitable encouragement to the holders, and at the same time desirable to avoid any measure which might afford an opportunity for artificial speculation. It was therefore deemed most advisable to fund the bills in the different stocks, leaving the choice of the particular stock optional to the holders. In consequence, according to the rate of the different stocks, the smallest *bonus* will be given in the 3 *per cents*, a larger *bonus* in the 4 *per cents*, and a still greater in the 5 *per cents*. A meeting of respectable gentlemen, considerable holders of navy bills, was two days since held in the city. They there agreed to the proposition of funding the bills upon certain terms, which I have now to propose to the committee. The holders I divided into four classes, according to the date of the bills possessed by them—

1st class comprehending the months of { October,
November, } 1795.
December, }

2d class comprehending the months of { January,
February, } 1796.
March,
April, }

3d class comprehending the months of { May, } 1796.
June,
July,

4th class comprehending the months of { August,
September, } 1796.
October.

In my communication with many gentlemen upon the subject we computed

The 3 per cents at 58,

The 4 per cents at 75,

The 5 per cents at 88.

The holders of navy bills I should propose to have their option of any of the three kinds of stocks, with the following abatement on the present prices :

For the 1st class $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{of 2 per cent in the 3 per cents} \\ \text{of 3 per cent in the 4 per cents} \\ \text{of 4 per cent in the 5 per cents} \end{array} \right.$

For the 2d class { of 1 1-half per cent in the 3 per cents
of 2 1-half per cent in the 4 per cents
of 3 1-half per cent in the 5 per cents

For the 3d class { of 1 per cent in the 3 per cents
of 2 per cent in the 4 per cents
of 3 per cent in the 5 per cents

For the 4th class { of 1-half per cent in the 3 per cents
of 1 1-half per cent in the 4 per cents
of 2 1-half per cent in the 5 per cents

The bills to bear interest till the 12th of December, and the dividends to commence with the respective funds, viz.

The 3 per cent consols } from November last.
The 5 per cents }

The 4 per cents — from Michaelmas last.

Without troubling the committee farther with the details of terms, I will now shortly state the average of the *bonus* upon all the classes of bills. It will amount to

1 1-4th in the 3 per cents.

2 1-4th in the 4 per cents.

3 1-4th in the 5 per cents.

In addition to the out standing Navy Bills, there are also Exchequer Bills unfunded to the amount of two millions and a half. These Exchequer Bills do not become due till the 5th of July. But in my opinion it is advisable to put them

on the same footing as the Navy Bills. I therefore propose to fund them at the rate of 1 and half per cent. interest, which, as nearly as possible, corresponds with the terms allowed for the different classes of navy Bills. These measures, I am convinced, will have a very great tendency to relieve the public credit, to facilitate the operations of commerce, and to promote the general flourishing state of the country. And at the same time I cherish the idea, that whenever in future it shall be necessary to issue exchequer bills for the public, we may be able to adopt regulations to issue them for such a period, and at such a rate of interest as may prevent the possibility of their falling into such discount as may be attended with material loss to the public, and with injury to the national credit. I shall for the present conclude with moving my first resolution—

That provision be made for enabling his Majesty to satisfy all the Bills payable in the course of the navy, victualling, and transport offices, which were made out on or before the 27th of October, 1796, amounting to the sum of 11,993,167l. 19s. 9d.

Mr. *Hussey* said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has stated that his object is to remove the navy and exchequer bills out of the market; but not having money to pay them off, he wishes to pay them off by way of loan. The business of the committee, therefore, is to enquire whether the loan proposed be a right loan or not. For his own part, Mr. *Hussey* declared, that he was in possession of sufficient information upon the subject. He conceived the question of present discussion to be, Whether or not the bargain with the holders of navy and exchequer Bills was, or was not, advantageous to the public? In order to be able to decide this question, it would be necessary to know what discount was allowed for the different months. He had not calculated the rate of interest in the 5 *per cents.* but in the 3 *per cents.* he computed it at 6l. 5s. and in the 4 *per cents.* at 6l. 15s. What he wished particularly to be informed of was the rate of interest which the public were to pay for their money?

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* in reply said, he was perfectly ready to give the hon. gentleman or the committee any information in his power. It appeared to him, that the hon. gentleman in the calculation which he had submitted to the committee had supposed that all the bills were to be paid at the highest rate of discount; the question at present was not however whether these bills were or were not to be paid for at the end of fifteen months; if the public abide by their contract with their creditors they must all be paid. The

question

question was, Whether they ought to be paid now, or at the different periods when they became due? The original bargain could not at present be discussed, and however disadvantageous to the public it might have been rendered by a combination of circumstances, the engagement was obligatory. It became a question of expediency however, and upon this he believed there would be but one opinion, Whether the government floating securities ought to be taken out of the market now, or allowed to remain? Gentlemen must be aware that it was optional in the bill-holders to accept of payment at this period, and therefore it was necessary to offer them some temptation. He believed that on an average it would be found that the public paid a trifle more than 5 *per cent.* for the money; and however much he deplored the necessity of granting such disadvantageous terms to the public creditors, since the necessity existed, it ought to be met with fortitude and spirit.

Mr. *Hussey* contended that he had a right to be informed what was the average discount upon the whole of the bills. The right hon. gentleman had attempted to justify the measures which he proposed from necessity, but he begged leave to remind him that it was a necessity of his own creating. He contended that the terms offered to the bill-holders were extravagant in the extreme, as the man who took government bills at 14 *per cent.* discount, purchases into the 3 *per cents.* at 49. He thought that the conduct of ministers was highly reprehensible in incurring debts which they had not the means of paying off.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* confessed that he had been extremely disappointed in the event of the speculation which had been undertaken, but he affirmed, at the same time, that he had neglected no possible precaution to insure the public advantage. For a considerable time navy bills kept up nearly at *par* from the general pressure upon all government securities, and from the magnitude of our naval expence which had been carried to an enormous extent; the event with respect to these bills had turned out such as he had not foreseen, nor did he think it was possible that he could foresee it.

Mr. *Fox* rose and delivered his opinion to the following effect. The proposition which has been submitted to the committee, appears to me to require a good deal of explanation which we have not yet heard. With regard to the question of the debt, or whatever the right hon. gentleman may be pleased to term it, he admits that the necessity for

contracting it is to be deplored. But regret is surely not the only sentiment which the House and country must feel on the present occasion. It is impossible for members of parliament who entertain a proper sense of the importance of the trust committed to them by their constituents, not to make some observations on the state of the country, which has so exceedingly deceived the honourable gentleman, and which has suggested the necessity of the strange and unprecedented measures which are proposed to be adopted. In the first budget of last session, we heard of a million and a half of navy bills, in the next we heard of four millions, and now we are told of sums exceeding ten millions; and at what time did this uncertainty obtain? not at the beginning of a war, when the scale of operations might be unsettled, and the estimates of expence undefined; but when many articles of provisions were at so high a price as to raise an alarm in the country respecting its dearest interests, and when they were higher than they have been at any subsequent period. Yet the honourable gentleman is content with deploring the necessity which has given rise to the extravagant measure which he now proposes to adopt, and with calling upon the committee not to look to that line of conduct by which the country has been reduced to its present situation, but to confine its views to the mode of extricating it from the difficulties under which it unfortunately labours. But it is impossible for any man in the House not to make some observations upon the general state of the finances of the country, at this moment, which I contend is wholly unexampled and unparalleled. With respect to the subject more immediately under the consideration of the committee, I must say a few words; and it is right to know in the first place, what interest those who received government bills in the month of September, at 14 *per cent.* discount, will have for their money? I mean in respect to that class of bills which it is meant to fund in the 5 *per cents.* At one time I believe the bills were at 15 *per cent.* discount; but I shall compute from 14 as the medium. About sixty days ago, for 100*l.* they advanced 86*l.* In the first instance then they gained the whole discount, which was 14 *per cent.* In the next place they receive 5 and a half *per cent.* for I understand it is proposed to allow them 2 and half *per cent.* upon the present market price, which is 88, besides the 4 *per cent.* interest, which they had during the sixty days. With the discount and interest, therefore, they actually have at the rate of 103*l.* *per cent. per annum* for their money.

money. This to be sure is one class, and the calculation is only applicable to a certain part of the Bills; but the interest upon the rest is in an extravagant proportion. I ask then after all that we have heard of those exhausting and ruinous systems of finance which have been adopted by other states; whether the government of this country is at last reduced to the necessity, whether from the general state of public credit, from accidental and unforeseen circumstances, or from the improvidence and extravagance of those who preside in the department of finance, to pay 103*l. per cent. per annum* for the money which they borrow from the public? I ask, if this be admitted, which cannot be denied, at least with respect to one class of bills, whether when the public are obliged to borrow money at the rate of 103*l. per cent. per ann.* it is not incumbent upon the House of Commons, as guardians of the public money, to enter into some enquiry into the state of the finances of the country? I allow that we have no right to dictate to the holders of these bills, the terms upon which they are to be funded; nor do I object to the measure of funding them; but I cannot give into the maxim in finance more than in politicks, of applying a remedy to an existing evil without taking precautions for preventing its return. While we attempt to extricate ourselves from our present embarrassments, it is our duty to take care that in future we do not fall into a situation of equal difficulty. But let us come a little nearer to the point; admitting what cannot be questioned, that the holders of navy bills have a right to be paid at stated periods, it certainly does not follow that when they are paid at considerably earlier than that at which the Bills became due, that the terms offered to them now should be as good, and far less than they should be better, than they would be entitled to, were they to retain the Bills in their possession till the date of their payment arrived; for it must be observed, that navy or exchequer bills is a species of property which cannot be applied to commercial purposes. If a person is in possession of 100*l.* he can vest it in the funds, he may stake it in trade, or he may employ it in a number of ways in which it may make very productive returns. But the holders of navy or exchequer bills must keep the bills in their possession till the terms of payment, with the profit only of 4 *per cent.* which was originally allowed them. To state the funding of these bills then, as contracting a new loan for the public, was an unfair representation of the transaction; and when the subject is fairly considered, there is something on the face of the present proposition extremely

extremely singular: you are only bound by your obligation to pay four *per cent.* for your money, and you convert it into a debt for which you have to pay between five and six *per cent.* Those, for instance, who may chuse stock in the five *per cents.* have had the good fortune to lend you money for which they receive 103l. *per cent.*; and to those fortunate individuals who were only entitled to four *per cent.* interest, you make the public, who have the misfortune to be their debtor, give them 1l. 18s. additional interest. I know not, for I have not calculated what it will cost the public, but it must be an enormous expence, at a period when we shall soon be called upon in some shape or other to make very handsome efforts. In short, after borrowing money, whether from misfortune or indiscretion, on the most disadvantageous terms, you add near two *per cent.* to the already exorbitant profits of the public creditor, and thus subject the public to another severe loss, in addition to those which it has before sustained. I certainly am not bound to negative the proposition, or to shew that such measures ought not to be adopted; but I consider myself as fairly entitled to demand some explanation of terms, which at first sight must strike every man as highly prejudicial to the public. As to the cause of the present embarrassed state of the public finances, the honourable gentleman ascribes it to the increased prosperity of the country. It certainly appears to me a very paradoxical proposition (perhaps it may not appear so strange to others who from their situation in life have had better opportunities of studying the subject,) that when a country is most flourishing, there should be the greatest scarcity of every thing. I cannot refrain from at least starting a doubt which occurs to me upon the subject: if the present embarrassment, arise merely from the want of a circulating medium, and not from a deficiency of capital, then the circulating medium would fall in value in proportion as the capital rose, or in other words, that the nominal value of every thing would be cheap, whereas we find that the nominal value of every thing is dear; so that we have this paradox to solve, that things are dearest when they are to be had in the greatest plenty in the market.

The next point I must observe upon is how far the public are bound by the agreements which the honourable gentleman may conclude. I know that in law they are not binding, nor is it honour which constitutes their tie, but prudence may determine us to give them sanction. How then does the present case stand? The holders of the Bills have an
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option whether they shall accede to the terms which may have been proposed. After the House of Commons has agreed to carry into effect the transaction, the option of the holders still remains open. I should desire to know then at what time the public is considered to be bound, which is understood to take place when the report of this committee is agreed to? [Monday was mentioned from the treasury bench.] Upon Monday, then, the House of Commons agrees to make a bargain for fourteen or fifteen millions, and becomes bound to individuals to that extent. What time, I should wish to know, are the holders to be allowed to signify their consent? I have understood that they are to intimate their determination by the 8th of November. In what situation will the House of Commons then be placed? They will be pledged to fulfil a bargain, the advantage or disadvantage of which will depend upon the state of the stocks. Engagements of such a nature are always dangerous for the public. The public accedes to the terms upon the 1st of November, the holders of Bills are free till the 8th. The public in this interval can derive no advantage from any alteration which the value of stocks may experience, while such an event may present to the holders such advantages as might induce them to refuse to accede to the terms to which the public are engaged. This I confess is an inconvenience which, in some measure, is unavoidable in transactions of this nature. In peace, however, the inconvenience is slightly felt, because events which can make a decided impression upon the funds are not very likely to occur. In time of war the events which arise are more apt to produce sudden alterations. Such a period even of war, however, may be chosen as to remove the probability of such a change. But what is the character of the present period? Is not this moment the most exposed to vicissitude which has taken place in the history of the war? Are not the fluctuations of stock more frequent, and the probabilities of change more strong than at any former time? What have been the events of the last week? Do not these circumstances evince the variations which a period so big with events, and so important in its aspect, may produce? Into this bargain then do you enter, under the probability of great events, and the consequent change which the stocks may experience. To all the consequences of such alterations the public are pledged, while the holders of the Bills are left free to avail themselves of events which may arise, and to determine themselves by the advantages they can obtain. At a time when important
events

events were in expectation; at a period when fluctuation in the funds were more uncertain than at any former æra, has the honourable gentleman chosen to expose the public to an inconvenience which, more or less, exists at every time, but which in such a situation must apply with particular effect. Seeing then all the disadvantages of the terms on which the honourable gentleman proposed to conclude his transaction, I feel that it is a duty incumbent upon us to enquire into all the circumstances which are connected with it, and to demand a particular explanation of the necessity of adopting an expedient which is to be carried into effect at such an expence and sacrifice to the public. The honourable gentleman hinted at the design of embracing some measures to prevent navy bills from being subject to such discounts, as we have experienced upon this and other occasions. I am extremely happy to hear that such a plan is in agitation, and so far as it seems to go, and on its first appearance, it meets my approbation. But the honourable gentleman has already tried the effect of measures directed to this object. He already has limited the period for which navy bills should be issued to 15 months. What, however, has been the consequence? At no period of the American war, when navy bills were frequently unpaid for more than two years, when the general funds of the country were still farther depressed than during the present war, when the interest upon the navy bills were frequently unpaid for more than two years, when the general funds of the country were still farther depressed than during the present war, when the interest upon the navy bills that were issued did not commence till six months after their date, and then there was no fixed time for their payment, such a discount had never been experienced. This point leads me to other considerations of a very important nature, and which shew the situation of the country requires the most serious attention. What were the peculiar circumstances in which this depression of government securities has taken place? It is when great exertions have been made to heighten the public credit; it is when, under an act of parliament, an annual sum of one million is appropriated to the liquidation of the national debt that we have seen this extraordinary circumstance happen. The honourable gentleman last year took an unusual step to remove this evil. He came forward with a second loan in the month of May, which was intended to remove the floating securities from the market, and to produce a higher state of credit. Either the remedy of the honourable
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gentleman did not operate to bring about the end proposed, or, what I consider to be in reality the true state of the case, the difficulties were too powerful for the remedy to overcome. Now again you feel the same inconveniencies recur. But in truth you cannot apply the remedies so fast as the difficulties thicken. Every day adds to the embarrassments; every day plunges you deeper and deeper in perplexity which you in vain attempt by these measures to remove. It is for this reason that I require some conviction before I can agree to the theory, or to reduce it into practice at such an expence. I must have some certainty, not physical certainty, but a moral certainty of some good to be obtained before I can consent to vote away the money of my constituents, and to pay 6 *per cent* instead of four. Before I agree to a measure so extraordinary and so expensive, I must have some more assurance than I yet have had of the efficacy of these expedients—some stronger proofs than I can derive from the experience of the plans of those who manage the finances of this country before I can agree to allow an addition of 1l. 18s. *per cent.* to be paid upon the securities of government. I wish the committee to consider what is the amount of this extraordinary allowance. Taking it as applying to the whole sum to be funded, it was 240,000l. This calculation, perhaps, does not apply to the whole of the sum, but certainly to a very considerable part of it. Last year the honourable gentleman had not foreseen this extraordinary issue of navy bills: a great proportion of them, therefore, have more than half a year to run, but even upon this supposition, the amount of the loss to the public from this additional rate of interest was 120,000l. Some gentleman may, indeed, be disposed to calculate that when so much was given by the country, so trifling an article may easily be overlooked. This, however, is not the manner in which we ought to reason. We ought to consider every thing as of importance which adds, however minutely, to the public expence and to the public burthens. We ought not to calculate this as a trifling matter when so many millions are voted away, but what it is when giving so much, so little is left to squander. Of the present measure I cannot approve before I know the other part of the scheme of finance which the honourable gentleman is to employ, and the future system which he purposes to introduce. We must know every thing connected with the measure, and receive every explanation which tends to demonstrate its necessity, before we can be justified in giving our assent to an expedient

which presents terms so disadvantageous to the public and imposes an additional 2 *per cent.* upon so considerable a sum.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* in reply; I rise in order to give a short explanation on some of the points just now stated by the right honourable gentleman. But I must previously remark, that he seems to consider the real and fundamental questions to be; 1st, the general propriety of funding outstanding Bills; and, 2dly, whether or not this be the right moment to adopt such a measure? Yet it is somewhat extraordinary, that the rest of his speech was taken up in painting in the strongest terms, and with the utmost ingenuity the evil of so immense a mass of floating unfunded debt. While he describes the evil in so striking a point of view, he at the same time would suffer it to continue in all its enormity, and objects to the remedy, merely because he is uncertain of its issue. While he so loudly inveighs against the great mass of outstanding debt, he not only objects to the particular remedy now proposed; he not only avoids to suggest any measure by which the inconvenience might be removed, but he argues as if the attempt to remove it would be attended with detriment to the public; and, as if it must necessarily be suffered to continue unprovided for, under all the embarrassments now experienced from its operation. It is evident, that, while so much floating unfounded debt remains in the market subject to a considerable discount, it must not only be productive of material disadvantage to commerce, but attended with a heavy loss to the public. And, if the exigence of the service compel government to issue more exchequer Bills, under the depreciated state of those already in the market, the loss may be infinitely greater than the amount of the *bonus* allowed in order to take the Bills out of circulation. The question then is not to be considered on narrow and contracted grounds, but on a wide and comprehensive scale. The effect of this immense mass of floating unfunded debt is to be examined as it acts upon publick credit, and on commercial speculation on the actual resources, and the future prospects of the country. The right honourable gentleman has talked largely of the advantage that will accrue to individuals from the proposed measure. Granting his statement to be just, it would surely be a strange policy, because even an unreasonable advantage might accrue to individuals, not to take a great and essential benefit to the public. The right honourable gentleman says that we are not bound to pay 100l. now, that we are only legally bound to pay at the rate of 4 *per cent.* interest.

interest. After all, what is the mighty difference? we are not bound indeed to pay 100*l.* to day, but we are bound to pay 102*l.* or 103*l.* within the period of seven months. This reasoning is in no point applicable to the principal consideration of providing a remedy for an evil which is at present attended with so much embarrassment and inconvenience. The question properly to be considered is, what is the proportion which the value now given for those Bills holds to the rate of interest accumulating during a period of seven months? It will be found to be no more than paying a present value to the holder of the bills proportioned to his certain and vested right at the end of that period. The right honourable gentleman states, that you are paying a *bonus* of 2 *per cent.* above the rate of the legal interest. He has dwelt upon this sum as if that was to be considered as a perpetual interest, which is only to be paid in the proportion of short successive periods, according to the different classes of the bills. The *bonus* even in the highest case is only 1*l.* 18*s.* The right honourable gentleman chose to take the extreme case, and after all, this is the extent of that *bonus* of which he has so loudly complained, and so greatly magnified. He states the present to be a bad time for adopting such a measure; he considers it as a weighty objection that you were bound by the terms which you offer to the holders of those bills while they are free either to accept or reject them. If this is an inconvenience, it is one which must always be experienced when recourse is had to the measure of funding, and which could only be obviated by a determination never to fund any part of the publick debt. It is an inconvenience which is unavoidably connected with the nature of the system. The question is, whether you will continue the evil with all the present inconveniencies for a longer period of fifteen months, rather than make one effort to remove at once the cause of all the embarrassment, and restore the sources of national prosperity to their natural channel? The honourable gentleman objects also to the present moment on account of the particular state of publick affairs, and the fluctuation likely to arise from that situation. If we neglected a week for the purpose of offering terms for the holders, the probable events which might be expected to occasion a greater than ordinary degree of fluctuation, that circumstance would unquestionably be a fair ground of objection. Certainly a period of war is particularly calculated to call forth a spirit of speculation, and the existence of a negotiation may be stated to give double force to this propensity. But

does the honourable gentleman carry his rejections to the particular period so far as to suppose that you are not to take measures during the continuance of a war to remedy a great source of publick inconvenience. I on the contrary feel that, possessing abundant and powerful resources to carry on the war, it becomes you to exert your energy to remove an evil which may cripple your resources and enfeeble your efforts. I am convinced that, when that evil is removed, you will find no deficiency of abundant means of exertion, and that the prosperity of your situation will be such as to inspire you with additional grounds of confidence. It is therefore that I consider this as a measure highly fitting to be adopted during a period of war. Nor do I consider this as a measure less eligible in another view of our situation, in the prospect of peace. It cannot surely be expected that at the very commencement of a negotiation of so momentous a nature, and so extensive in its relations, any occurrence should take place within the short period of a week decisive of its issue. He must, indeed, reason at an extraordinary and unaccountable rate who calculates on such an event. However sanguine in my own wishes for the auspicious return of tranquillity, I cannot admit that the discussions of the great and important interests of Great Britain and her allies, and of those weighty and complicated points which they necessarily involve, are likely to be so speedily decided or brought within so short a compass as to have any influence on the present measure. There is, indeed, one possible case which I reluctantly notice, and which I sincerely trust will, in the present instance, be averted, which might render the result of negotiation matter of such speedy issue, namely, that some occurrence should take place, or some proposition be started in its very outset, of such a nature as at once to put a negative on all our hopes of peace, and so put a stop to all further proceedings. If we shall be ultimately successful in the grand object of all our wishes, it is not the space of a single week which can give any definitive turn to the complexion of negotiation, far less decide the important issue. But if from the magnitude and importance of the questions to be discussed, it should be necessary to adopt a plan of negotiation, more extensive and likely to be protracted for a considerable period, is it reasonable that during all the time we should submit to the pressure of an evil, which, so long as it exists, must continue to weigh down our prosperity and which we possess the means instantly to remove, if we have only the energy to exert it?

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Are we in the mean time to exhibit to the enemy that picture of distress and embarrassment which is the consequence of this evil, and which, though originating in a temporary cause, so deeply affects our resources by its operation, while it depends only on ourselves to apply the remedy? The very circumstance of negotiation is an additional reason why we should free ourselves of every source of embarrassment that may fetter our own operations, or encourage those with whom we treat to rise in their demands. In this point of view, I consider this measure as an equally desirable preliminary, whatever may be the future situation of the country: if we are compelled to prosecute the war, it will add vigour and confidence to our resources; and, on the other hand, it will enable us to enjoy the full extent of the blessings of peace, if we shall succeed in effecting the restoration of peace, on the only terms on which I can possibly desire it to be restored; terms in every respect fair and equitable, and adequate to the just pretensions of the country. I am very confident, that, when the present measure shall be adopted, all the beneficial consequences which I have now attempted to describe will be experienced in their utmost extent. The right honourable gentleman asks me to explain what he terms a paradox, as applied to the situation of this country, namely, that a high degree of prosperity may be a cause of temporary embarrassment. I consider the proposition as so obvious and simple, that I consider it as necessary to employ only a few words to account for the opinion I hold on the subject. My criterions of the general prosperity of the country, notwithstanding the pressure of temporary embarrassment, are, first, that while the funds were sensibly affected from the scarcity of money, the revenue still continued high; and during a period of war, approached very nearly to what it had been in the most flourishing æra of peace. Secondly, the credit of British merchants remained on the most respectable footing, notwithstanding the difficulties of the time; and this reputation was supported not by confining themselves to a contracted scale of trade, but by launching into the most extensive operations of commerce, and even by enlarging the sphere of their former industry, and opening new sources of wealth to the country. These are unequivocal symptoms of the actual wealth and prosperity of the country. But it is evident that in proportion to the extension of trade, and the increase of capital, the expenditure becomes greater: in proportion to the magnitude of the machine must be the means required to put it in motion.

motion. Besides it is to be recollected that the sums which were necessary to carry on the war abroad tended to diminish the amount of the circulating medium at home. I trust I have now explained the supposed paradox, that some degree of temporary embarrassment may be connected with a state of high general prosperity; that I have even proposed that in proportion to the rapid augmentation of commerce, the pressure which is experienced for the moment may be more severe. By adopting the present measure, I am however convinced that we shall in a great degree remove the cause of the evil, and give new life and vigour to our resources. It is a measure which I believe to be wise and proper, either in the prospect of peace, or in the certainty of determined war; but which above all I believe to be wise and expedient, in the precise state in which we now stand, while we are going on with a war, and while a negotiation is just begun. And in this view I can only regard the objections which the right honourable gentleman has urged with respect to the time, as arguments in favour of the measure. The effect of removing those Bills altogether out of the market, will infallibly be to take away from individuals the temptation which the rate of discount at which they stood presented to purchasers, so greatly to the detriment of the publick; to induce them to lay out their money in the funds, or to employ it for the purposes of commerce, which may afford them the prospect of still greater profit. The consequence must be to increase the quantity of circulating medium, to advance the state of publick credit, and to facilitate the operations of commerce. And with such great and important objects in view, it will surely ill become us to hesitate in adopting the measure, or to sacrifice the decided interests of the nation, in order to prevent a gain to individuals.

Mr. Fox in reply said, one part of my observation upon this subject was for illustration merely; but the right hon. gentleman has taken notice of it, and rested an argument upon it, as if I had treated the additional 2 *per cent.* as a permanent burden upon the publick. I stated that part of the case distinctly otherwise. The right honourable gentleman asks me, would I never fund navy and exchequer bills? There is but one way of answering a question thus broadly put. This particular case is like every other extraordinary one—to be governed by his own circumstances. My opinion is, that if it be necessary to issue navy bills to any very considerable amount, and parliament should adopt a shorter period for the payment of them than has hitherto been done, it will

will be more convenient to pay them when they become due than it has hitherto been, because they will not be liable to the same fluctuation, nor depend so much on the state of the funds as they have hitherto done. It is however one thing to state generally, you should never fund your navy bills; and another to fund them under circumstances highly disadvantageous to the publick. Such as appears to me to be the case at the present time, should the measure be adopted which is now proposed. This is a distinction to which the right honourable gentleman did not advert. He took notice, however, of another part of what I submitted to the committee. He says I rested on the 5 *per cent.* in order to strike the House as the most excessive part of the plan which is before us; whereas it is probable the holders of bills will invest in the other funds, the 4 and 3 *per cents.* Very likely; but then I say if they do I shall take it for granted they adopt that fund that appears to them to be the most to their advantage; and therefore there was nothing unfair in my taking the 5 *per cent.* as a mere illustration, the more especially as the holders of the bills are to chuse the fund in which they will have their property invested. The right honourable gentleman says he is sorry for the enormous profits which some individuals have made by those bills. I am neither sorry nor glad for what has attended speculation; as far as the interest of individuals is concerned, I am not sorry that individuals have had large profits upon their commercial dealings; but I am sorry that the publick are obliged to sustain enormous losses.

The right hon. gentleman has said a great deal on the peculiar propriety of the measure before us, on account of the negotiation which is now going forward, or rather opened. I waited for every word with anxiety—what did I hear? “That you should shew and display your resources to the enemy.” This is not the first time I have heard this made use of as an argument in favour of the measure which the minister proposed to this house; did he not make use of the same expression when the last loan was discussed in this house? A loan which was attended with circumstances much too strong and singular in their nature to be forgotten. Did he not say at that moment, that the loan was necessary, in order to shew the enemy the strength of our resources? I did not give much credit then to assertions of that nature. But what credit can I give to them now? The right honourable gentleman said, upon the discussion of that loan, that the enemy were deceived with respect to the difficulty we had in raising money to carry
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on the war; that it was material to us all that we should negotiate that loan, and at that time, although the terms were disadvantageous to the public, because it was material the French should know the flourishing state of our finances; and therefore it was that he negotiated that loan. Why not do so now? Has the necessity of making the enemy acquainted with the flourishing state of our finances ceased? Are we now so much more convinced of the prosperous condition of our affairs than we were at that moment? Are the French so much more convinced? Is Europe so much more convinced of the prosperity of our condition—of our ability to borrow thirty or forty millions more, without inconvenience, that it is now unnecessary to boast of it? Is that the reason why a loan is not brought forward at this moment? Is that the reason why the minister does not come forward at the hour of negotiation, to shew to the enemy the prosperous condition of our finances. I should have thought that if the minister was sincere in his plan last year, that he wanted the loan at that time, and on the terms he concluded it, only for the purpose of shewing the extent of our resources, and not merely to facilitate the scheme by false assertions, he would have pursued the same plan now, for certainly there never was a period in which it was more essential for us that the enemy should be of opinion our resources are extensive, than the present moment. What will be the inference from the measure which is now before you? Directly the reverse of what the right honourable gentleman expressed such anxiety for on the last loan; by the step you are taking, you only shew a part of the state of your finance, and that in so favourable a light as to induce the suspicion that you yourselves know the enemy would exult if you made a real discovery of the whole of your condition. The right honourable gentleman did not like the mode in which my honourable friend treated this subject; he did not approve of the idea of calling it a loan, and yet he treated it himself in the way of a loan, when he talked of the *bonus*. I call it a loan with a very extravagant *bonus*.

The right honourable gentleman has touched upon a topic, in which we are all too much interested to be inattentive to; he says, that in a week we are not likely to have any news to raise the funds. I am sorry for it—that is a subject which I do not desire to discuss at this moment, because I have no wish to say any thing that might possibly impede the progress of negotiation; but I cannot help thinking that in any point of view the subject may be considered, the hopes of the public must

must have operated to a certain extent upon the funds, since the negotiation was opened; surely the sound of the word peace, from such authority as it came from lately, must have acted upon the hopes of a considerable part of the public. The right honourable gentleman seems to think otherwise. I shall say no more upon that subject, for reasons that I dare say are obvious to the committee, and I have said thus much upon it, for reasons which I trust are equally obvious.

The right honourable gentleman tells us that he is not fond of his own theory. I know not whose theory it is on which he acts and attempts to reason, but it appears to me to be a very questionable, if not delusive theory. He observes that this country has felt a temporary distress in its finances, from the extension of its commerce, that is, that its present apparent distress arises out of its greatly increasing wealth. I do not say that is impossible. I have no experience upon that subject. I know of no country (except ours, if it be in that state), that has ever manifested its increasing wealth by its distresses. However, I mean to say no more, than that I will endeavour to examine a doctrine that does not seem to me to be very rational. An opportunity will occur, I hope, for the discussion of that point, as it applies to this country. And if it should, I believe this will turn out to be the case. Some of the distress will appear to have been imaginary, and such I fear, will be the case, with regard to our wealth. I say this the more confidently, because every thing that has happened lately, has been alledged as a proof of the prosperity of this country. I really know of no public event that has happened since the commencement of this war, that has not been quoted as a proof of the increase of our wealth. That argument that proves every thing; that reasoning which makes every thing prove one point in human affairs is, I confess, that for which I have no great esteem. Some years ago, certain individuals of extensive commercial concerns were very much embarrassed. A parliamentary measure was adopted for their relief. Upon that occasion, I remember, we were told, "It is true that the credit of some individuals indeed is low, but the public credit is higher than it ever was before this period; nay, it is the increase of the national wealth that is the cause of this temporary embarrassment!" A change has taken place, now the public credit has fallen, and every thinking man in the kingdom "is alarmed at the state of it, and we are told that true it is, the public credit is lowered, but then look at the credit of individuals in commerce, it is from their condition the real state of the country is to be estimated;" that is to say, that which was worth no-

thing formerly as an argument, is now worth every thing; and what was formerly worth every thing, is now worth nothing. This mode of reasoning, I own, does not make a very deep impression upon me. All these conjectures should pass for little. The only certainty we have is, that this country has from time to time borne most enormous burdens, and which are now most enormously encreasing; and all that we hear concerning our ability to bear our burdens, are mere speculations upon future advantages.

The right honourable gentleman said, that if we are to continue to issue our navy bills, they shall be issued under different terms from what they have been accustomed to be. I did not understand him clearly upon that subject. I do not know, whether he means to have a substitute for navy bills. We ought to know as to the plan to be pursued in future upon that subject, in order that we may know whether this measure will co-operate with that plan, and whether in any measure they can be made to assist each other. If the right honourable gentleman has any plan of issuing navy bills payable at a shorter period than they have ever hitherto been paid, I shall approve of it in one particular. I mean the shortness of the time of payment. But I am of opinion it would be unnecessary to include in that law the whole of the navy bills, because the force of that law, on such bills as are included in it, will tend to diminish the discount on those that are not. There was one part of the speech of the right honourable gentleman so silly, so childish, that really when I heard it I almost distrusted my own senses. I was hardly sure that it was him I was hearing. It was that part of his speech which stated to us the effect which the measure now proposed already had: the discount had already been diminished upon navy bills—most wonderful that such a measure should have had such an effect! What other effect did he expect it to have? Indeed there required not half the sagacity of the right honourable gentleman to make that discovery.

The minister has not stated what he means to do in future with respect to navy bills, or any other government security. Before we enter upon a plan so large as this is, we ought to know a great deal more than is yet confided to us. Suppose he continues his old way of issuing navy bills—does any intelligent man think that this measure will diminish the discount upon government bills in future? Should he be so unfortunate for some years to come, in all transactions of this nature, as he has been of late years, what distress must this country suffer?

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The whole of this subject, and many general topics connected with it, were before this house last year; upon which occasion an honourable friend of mine did himself great credit. He stated most ably the inconvenience of this mode of raising money, both for the army and navy. The political and commercial effects he shewed, to my conviction, would be most ruinous, of which the proposition now before you is a proof. That to a certain degree the evil was inevitable I am willing to allow; but there have been no peculiar circumstances in the course of the last year of this war, which ministers can fairly say went beyond the ordinary course of calculation as to the expences of this country. There are many reasons for expecting that their calculations should in that instance have been nearly correct. I do not mean so much to oppose the whole of the measure before you, as I desire to demur to the execution of it, until the minister shall have laid before us much more information as to his plan of finance than we possess at present.

Mr. *Hussey* said that the present measure would not tend to take money out of the market, for it was only withdrawing one species of paper security by giving another. He had heard it reported that the navy bills in question were not issued for naval service, but for the purpose of raising money to be applied to other objects, and he should be glad to hear this report contradicted from authority.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that he was not aware that there was any foundation for the report.

Mr. *Hussey* wished to know expressly whether any money had been applied to services for which it was not intended by parliament? To this no answer was made.

Sir *William Pulteney* said that he entertained great doubts of the propriety of the measure proposed by the *Chancellor of the Exchequer*. The sudden rise of the discount must have arisen from some extraordinary cause. The export of specie could not have produced to such a degree this effect. At the end of a war discounts are generally lessened, because credit begins to gain ground; the prospect of new issues is removed and the circulating is encreased. In time of war it was difficult to diminish the discounts, because it was difficult to encrease the circulating medium. There were two ways by which this might be attempted. By taking government securities out of the market no alteration in the quantity of the circulating medium was effected. What was obtained by a loan in one way was returned in another. It was necessary to encrease the circulating medium and render

the quantity equal to the demand; no juggling tricks and pretended expedients would be of any avail, and to produce this effect the operation of commerce was slow. He did not think therefore that the present measure, though attended with such an exorbitant expence, and such disadvantageous terms, would answer the desired end. Till the quantity of circulating medium was encreased, nothing could keep up the value of navy bills. The honourable gentleman should have tried the effect of the principle of competition which he had extolled in other cases. He should have offered four millions to be funded in the first place, and allowed a competition to take place among the holders. In this case he was convinced that a better bargain might have been made. Upon this occasion the honourable gentleman had been mislead. He had an opportunity of obliging a number of individuals, though he did not believe this was the motive of his conduct. He was convinced, however, that the measure would not produce the effect.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he always heard with respect whatever fell from the honourable baronet, though he could not help differing from him on the present occasion, and in the opinion which he held on this subject, he believed he agreed with every monied man in the country, with whom he had ever conversed. He nevertheless differed from him on a very plain and simple principle. There was a great and essential difference between the capital vested in the public funds, and that which from its nature lay dormant. It was well known that navy bills floating in the market were held by persons in the metropolis, and absorbed a quantity of capital, but when funded were diffused over the kingdom, and employed what arose from the profits of industry and commerce in different places.

Mr. Fox asked, if there were any particular documents on the table with regard to the mode of funding the navy bills according to their various dates?

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* replied in the affirmative, and said, that proper divisions had been made by months.

The first question was then put and carried.

The Chairman then put the second question,

That provision be made for enabling his Majesty to satisfy all the Exchequer bills made out by virtue of an act of last session of parliament, for enabling his Majesty to raise the sum of 2,500,000*l.* for the uses and purposes therein mentioned.

Which

Which was likewise carried, and the House being resumed, the report was ordered to be received on Monday.

The committees of supply, and ways and means, were postponed till Monday.

The committee on the King's speech was postponed till Thursday se'nnight.

The Quakers bill was read a second time, and committed for Wednesday next.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, October 31.

A person from the Custom-house brought up an account of the amount of bounties paid to the importers of corn to the 13th of October 1796.

Corrected accounts of the receipts and payments of the East India company from the 1st of March 1795, to 1st of March 1796, and from 1st of March 1796, to 1st of September 1796, as well as an account continued by estimate, to the 1st of March 1797, were received and ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. *Rose* moved, for the printing of as many of these accounts as would be necessary for the use of the members.

Ordered.

FUNDING THE NAVY AND EXCHEQUER BILLS.

The report of the committee of supply was brought up on funding the navy and exchequer bills.

Mr. *Fox* said, as he understood that the House would have the terms of this bargain more specifically stated in the committee of ways and means, he would reserve for that committee any observations he had to make on the subject.

The order of the day was read for a committee of ways and means, and the amount of the issue of the exchequer bills, and the estimate of the navy debt were ordered to be submitted to the said committee. Mr. *Hobart* in the chair.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that having already stated his ideas on the subject then under consideration of the committee, he should reserve himself till he had heard what further objections might be urged to the proposed measure, and should simply move the necessary resolutions.

I. That all persons entitled to any navy, victualling, and transport bills which were made on or before the 31st of December 1795, who shall on or before the 12th day of November 1796, carry the same (having had the interest computed and marked

marked at the navy, victualling, and transport offices, to the 16th of December 1796) to the treasurer of the Navy to be marked and certified to the Bank, shall in their option be entitled to every 100l. of such bills to

178l. 12s. 5d. 3 per cent. annuities, to commence 5th of July 1796, or to

138l. 17s. 9½d. 4 per cent. annuities, to commence 10th of October 1796, or to

119l. 0s. 11¼ 5 per cent. annuities, to commence 5th of July 1796,

to be payable half yearly out of the consolidated funds.

II. That the bills which were made out after the 31st of December 1795, and on or before the 30th of April 1796, shall in their option be entitled for every 100l. of such bills to

176l. 19s. 9¾d. 3 per cent. annuities, to commence 5th of July 1796, or to

137l. 18s. 7½d. 4 per cent. annuities, to commence 10th of October 1796, or to

118l. 0s. 10¼d. 5 per cent. annuities, to commence 5th of July 1796.

to be payable half yearly out of the consolidated fund.

III. That the bills which were made out after the 30th of April 1796, and before the 31st of July 1796, shall in their option be entitled for every 100l. of such bills to

175l. 8s. 9d. 3 per cent. annuities, to commence 5th of July 1796, or to

136l. 19s. 8½d. 4 per cent. annuities, to commence 10th of October 1796, or to

117l. 12s. 11¼d. 5 per cent. annuities, to commence 5th of July 1796,

to be paid half yearly out of the consolidated funds.

IV. The same bills, which were made out after the 31st of July, 1796, and before the 27th of October 1796, shall in their option be entitled for every 100l. of such bills to

173l. 18s. 3d. 3 per cent. annuities, to commence 5th of July 1796, or to

136l. 1s. 1d. 4 per cent. annuities, to commence 10th of October 1796, or to

116l. 19s. 2d. 5 per cent. annuities, to commence 5th of July 1796,

to be payable half yearly out of the consolidated funds.

V. That all persons entitled to exchequer bills made out pursuant to an act of last session for raising 2,500,000l. by vote of credit, who shall on or before the 12th day of November 1796. carry the same to the paymaster of the exchequer bills, shall receive a certificate entitling such person at his option for every 100l. of such bills to

176l. 19s. 9¾d. 3 per cent. annuities, commencing the 5th of July 1796, or to

137l. 18s. 7½d. 4 per cent. annuities, commencing 10th of October 1796, or to

118l. 6s. 10¼d. 5 per cent. annuities, commencing 5th of July 1796,

to be paid half yearly out of the consolidated fund.

Mr. Fox then rose and said, when a conversation took place on this subject on a former day, I then considered it as my duty to state to the committee some considerations, which weighed strongly in my mind; First, on the ruinous tendency of extending this system beyond all precedent in former times, even the most critical, which this country has ever witnessed: secondly, on the disadvantageous nature of the particular terms, on which this bargain is proposed to be

be concluded. Since that time I have had more leisure to consider the subject; I have also had an opportunity to consult gentlemen perfectly conversant in such questions, and to avail myself of their information. I am now, therefore, enabled to speak with greater confidence as to the particular terms of the bargain.

In my former calculations with respect to the rate of interest to the holders of navy bills, I calculated at 103 *per cent.* In this point I admit that I took the extreme case, and also that I made a small mistake in the use of the words *per cent.* I ought not to have calculated it at 103 *per cent.* but at the rate of 103 upon 85 or 86. The following is the accurate calculation of the interest made upon a navy bill bought two months ago at 15 *per cent.* discount, supposing it to be funded according to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's plan, in the 5 *per cents.* at 2 1-half *per cent.* below the market price of 88 :

Interest on 100l. for 60 days, at 4 <i>per cent.</i>	—	—	—	0	13	2
Interest on ditto, from the 30th of October to the 12th of December, being 43 days	—	—	—	—	0	9
Premium of 2 1-half <i>per cent.</i> on each 100l. stock, in the 5 <i>per cents.</i> valued at 88, or on 114l. stock, which is equivalent to 100l. in money,	—	—	—	—	2	16
Discount at 15 <i>per cent.</i>	—	—	—	—	15	0
					28	19
						5

18l. 19s. 5d. being allowed on 85l. (the purchase money of the navy bill) is equal to an interest on 100l. of 22l. 5s. 5d. If therefore the interest for 60 days is 22l. 5s. 5d. the interest for a whole year, or 365 days, will be 135l. 9s. It now turns out from this calculation, that instead of 103, the interest at the rate of a whole year amounts to 135; when bargains are made on such extravagant terms, examples of profusion may cease to strike the public mind with surprise, and the difference between 103 and 135 may be but little heeded. Is however the number of those bills which are to be funded on such enormous terms so very small, is the state of the country such as to enable it to conclude a bargain, on terms so extraordinary and unprecedented? The right honourable gentleman deploras the necessity which renders such a measure necessary; in my mind it is not enough to deplore the necessity which is attended with an evil of such magnitude; we ought also to seek the means to prevent it in future. On former occasions the right honourable gentleman himself was not the slowest to reprobate such instances of abuse; he was himself, in 1782, the member of a committee to examine into

into the state of public accounts, and to detect any instance of misconduct in the financial operations of ministers. Of this circumstance he was reminded by an honourable friend of mine, (Mr. Grey), the member for Northumberland, whose absence on the present occasion I regret; but whom at all times I can only regard with the highest sentiments of respect, admiration and esteem. When he was reminded by that honourable friend how far he had since deviated from the principles he professed, and the conduct he had adopted in 1782, his only defence was an appeal to similar instances of abuses which had formerly been practised; but in the present instance, he cannot even set up this ground of justification. He will not surely contend that navy bills have ever at any former period been issued to such an extent. It is necessary only to refer to the experience of last year; it must appear a most extraordinary and unprecedented fact, that there should have been issued navy bills to the amount of not less than eight millions more than had been foreseen in the calculations of the right honourable gentleman. If the public service called for such an immense sum, it was surely incumbent upon him even to have faced the inconvenience of calling together parliament at an unusual period, in order to obtain their sanction to raise the necessary supplies. He ought for two reasons to have adopted this measure of assembling parliament at such a crisis; first, to avoid the danger of the precedent of raising money to such an unlimited extent, without the regular sanction of the guardians of the public purse. Second, to prevent those ruinous terms of interest, with which the bargain for so large a sum must ultimately be attended to the public. I now come to advert to the particular terms. On the face of the bargain itself there always appeared to me something particular in the different rates offered to the holders of the bills. It is evident that the increase of the capital must be very different according to the different stocks, and that also the quantum of annuity must be very different on the same principle. The right honourable gentleman and myself formerly differed on the question, "Whether, in the system of funding, it was better for the public to make the interest light or to increase the capital?" I was rather disposed to think that to extend the capital was a less evil than to burden the public with a heavy interest. I suspect, however, that all our difference on this question was only with respect to the quantum. And as I would consider it advisable to make a small addition to the interest in order to diminish the capital, so the right honourable gentleman would

would also think it right somewhat to extend the capital, in order to alleviate the pressure of interest. The sinking fund bill has undoubtedly made some difference in the question. But what is the result which I now wish to submit to the committee? The natural result of this reasoning, with respect to capital and interest evidently is, That in proportion as the capital is extended, the interest ought to be low, and *vice versa*, in proportion as the capital is diminished, the interest ought to be increased. No proposition can be more obvious than this, yet, when in the present instance I applied it to the different rates of capital and interest in the different stocks proposed to the holders of the bills, I found directly the reverse to be the case. This will appear from the following comparative statement of the rates of capital and annuity, calculated in the four different classes of the terms offered to the respective holders of the bills.

FIRST CLASS.				Interest.
			l. s.	l. s. d.
Navy bill of 100l. funded in the 3 per cents. at 56, will				
create in stock a debt of	—	—	178 12	5 7 1
Ditto in the 4 per cents. at 72	—	—	138 18	5 11 1
Ditto in the 5 per cents. at 84	—	—	119 1	5 19 0

SECOND CLASS.				
Navy bill of 100l. funded in the 3 per cents. at 56 1-half,				
will create in stock a debt of	—	—	177 0	5 6 3
Ditto in the 4 per cents. at 72 1-half	—	—	137 18	5 10 4
Ditto in the 5 per cents. at 84 1-half	—	—	118 7	5 18 4

THIRD CLASS.				
Navy bill of 100l. funded in the 3 per cents. at 57, will				
create in stock a debt of	—	—	175 14	5 5 3
Ditto in the 4 per cents. at 73	—	—	137 0	5 9 7
Ditto in the 5 per cents. at 85	—	—	117 13	5 17 8

FOURTH CLASS.				
Navy bill of 100l. funded in the 3 per cents. at 57 1-half				
will create in stock a debt of	—	—	173 18	5 4 4
Ditto in the 4 per cents. at 73 1-half	—	—	136 1	5 8 10
Ditto in the 5 per cents. at 85 1-half	—	—	116 19	5 17 0

FIRST CLASS.				Diff. of Intst.
			l. s.	s. d.
Excess of stock funded in the 3 per cents. above the 4 per				
cents.	—	—	39 14	4 0
Ditto above the 5 per cents.	—	—	59 11	12 0

SECOND

SECOND CLASS.

In proportion to the difference in the first class, the difference of interest should have been s. d.

3	11	Excess of stock funded in the 3			
		per cents. above the 4 per cents	—	39	2
					4
11	10	Ditto above the 5 per cents.	—	58	13
					12
					0

THIRD CLASS.

3	11	Excess of stock funded in the 3			
		per cents. above the 4 per cents	—	38	14
					4
11	10	Ditto above the 5 per cents.	—	58	1
					12
					5

FOURTH CLASS.

3	10	Excess of stock funded in the 3			
		per cents. above the 4 per cents.	—	37	17
					4
11	6	Ditto above the 5 per cents.	—	56	19
					12
					8

This statement suggests many observations. If the capital is right, the difference of interest must be wrong. In the first class, the difference between the 3 *per cents.* and the 4 *per cents.* is 39l. 14s. the annuity is only four shillings. So that, in return for this capital of 39l. 14s. the public are only compensated by an annuity of four shillings. In the first class, the difference of capital between the 3 *per cents.* and the 5 *per cents.* is 59l. 11s. the difference of interest is 12s. The committee must here perceive the striking inequality between the rates of capital and interest in the 3 and the 5 *per cents.* But, in order to render this inequality still more apparent, let us compare the rates in the 5 *per cents.* of the first and fourth class. In the first class, the difference of capital between the 3 and 5 *per cents.* is 59l. 11s. the difference of interest is 12s. In the fourth class, the difference of capital is 56l. 19s. the difference of interest is 12s. 8d. Nothing farther can be necessary to shew the amazing disproportion of those rates, and that the terms are as inaccurately calculated in their proportions, as they are grossly extravagant in their general amount. I am indeed wholly at a loss to account upon what principle of calculation, or upon what ground of policy this measure can be supported. For I contend, that if the rates in the first class are arranged upon any rational principle, the proportion of those in the fourth, in the corresponding funds must be absurd in the extreme. Either, in the first class, you extend your capital beyond the proper bounds, or, in the fourth, you sacrifice too much interest.

However

However difficult it may be to arrange the degrees of those terms, that business, I think, ought to be submitted to the decision of parliament, and not left to the discretion of the stockholders. Instead of adopting the regular proportion, and calculating downwards, a directly contrary mode of calculation has been employed. The difference of interest is made greater in proportion as the capital is less, and *vice versa* in proportion as the capital is greater, the interest is less.

In the course of the discussion on this subject, we have repeatedly heard of the term *bonus*. The frequent introduction of this term *bonus*, upon this occasion, I for one have not considered to be very regular or auspicious. In borrowing of large sums at all times the necessity of a *bonus* is a matter of very serious consideration to the country, and forms no small addition to the pressure of public burdens; but let us consider the particular nature and circumstances of the present transaction. We shall find in this instance the hardship greatly increased, and the pressure doubly severe. Let us consider that those bills are originally issued at a discount of 7, 10, and ultimately of 14 and 15 *per cent.* In what light can this be considered but as a *bonus*? And after this enormous *bonus*, not a period when you are borrowing, but when you are taking measures to pay what you have borrowed, you think it necessary to give so much additional *bonus*. At most you can only state that this *bonus* is given in order to induce the holders to change the form of their security from the public. Is it possible not to foresee the consequences of such a proceeding in great financial operations, and such is the present situation of this country, that it is only to great financial operations we can look in order adequately to meet the public exigencies? Ought we not in discussing such a measure to advert a little to the resources of the country? Great and powerful as those resources may be, they must be nothing less than inexhaustible, if they are able to stand the effect of a repetition of such measures, particularly at a period when we know not how often or to what extent we may be required to give our sanction to fresh loans for the public service. How long is it fitting that the public should be called upon to buy up debt on such profuse and enormous terms? Good God, is it not a considerable *bonus*, when navy bills are bought up at 9 *per cent.* discount, and are now to be paid without any discount at all. Here I am told of the inconvenience of suffering such an immense mass of floating debt to remain unfunded in the market. I am told of the consequent scarcity of circulating medium, and of the important

relief which will in this respect be afforded by removing those bills out of the market. I am not much disposed to reason confidently on any hypothesis with respect to the circulating medium. The result of the hypothesis has generally shown that such reasonings are conducted very much in the dark. In 1793 there was the same complaint of the want of a circulating medium. In order to remedy the deficiency, five millions of Exchequer bills were then issued. Now as a remedy for the same evil, it is proposed to take a certain quantity of unfunded bills out of the market. The true cause of this scarcity of circulating medium, and of all the consequent embarrassment is, that we are spending fifty or sixty millions annually. It is to this enormous rate of expenditure we are to look as the real cause of the distress, and not to any partial and theoretical evil, which it is thus at different times, as suits the purpose of a minister, proposed to meet by remedies diametrically opposite. We are told that the evil day will come at last, and that it will be necessary to pay those bills at different intervals, at six, seven, or twelve months. I say then, rather borrow now on any terms, than submit to the unprecedented measure of buying up debt at such an enormous rate. I am not inclined to speculate on the future state of public credit, but I am not sanguine enough to hope, that if such measures as the present are adopted, it will be much improved at a future period. Do not, however, let us adopt the language, "Let us make any terms we can now, for we shall afterwards be obliged to make worse." I trust that this is not the justification of the present measure, and yet I see no other which can readily be adopted. What the credit of the country may be at a future period must necessarily depend on various causes, on the events of the war, on the probability of peace, or on the length of time during which there is a prospect that the war may be continued. My opinion is, that the adoption of such measures will tend more to injure the credit of the country, than any other expedient which possibly could be employed. Nothing can more effectually contribute to aggravate the public distress, than the attempt to conceal its real cause, to account for it by illusive and fallacious theories, and to meet it by partial and inefficient remedies. If we wish suitably to provide for the exigency of the crisis, and to redress the existing evils, let us not have recourse to empty hypothesis, or to contradictory expedients. Let us raise the public income to the scale of the public expenditure, or let us confine the expenditure within the limits of the income. We may thus expect to remedy the deficiency of the circulating medium

medium, and to remove the embarrassment which is in consequence experienced, which, while we persevere in our present system of unlimited confidence, and ruinous profusion, we never can hope to effect by listening to vague theories, or by adopting opposite expedients, to redress the same evil.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that though he should not detain the committee at any considerable length in what he had to offer, he should endeavour to follow the honourable gentleman through the principal points upon which he had touched. He was happy to have found an opportunity of explaining the true point of view in which the present measure was to be considered, and to reply to the exaggerated statements and highly coloured representations which the honourable gentleman had made. The first statement given by the honourable gentleman of the interest which the holders of navy bills would receive on a certain proportion of the bills, was at the rate of 103l. *per cent.* but he had now corrected his statement, and found that it amounted to 130l. While it was admitted that this was an extreme case, the honourable gentleman, however, had represented the calculation as applicable to a considerable part of the debt. This *corrected* statement the honourable gentleman would find it necessary to correct, if he examined with accuracy the whole of the circumstances from which it was derived. With regard to the principle upon which the subject was to be viewed, it was understood that the holder of navy bills had no security that the payment of the sums for which they were received, would be made in less than 15 months. If the public however, finds it convenient to discharge them in six weeks, or any other period less than that for which they were originally issued, was it fair to calculate as a profit on one month what from this circumstance arose upon a bill which the holder had received as payable at 15 months? Was it fair to represent the credit of the country as in a general state of depreciation, because individuals might receive a profit which they had not in their contemplation, and which could in no degree be considered as the motive from which the security was taken, nor the rate at which government was supplied? But even had it been true as to the general character which it gave to the credit of the country, which the honourable gentleman had laboured to prove so affected and so depreciated, it could not justify him in concluding that the credit of government securities was lower than at any former period. Did the honourable gentleman think that the present period is that when navy bills were at the highest discount? The honourable

able gentleman surely need not be reminded of that period when he himself filled a high office in administration, when not in a moment of war, but nine months after preliminaries of peace were signed, four millions of Exchequer bills were issued, which fell to a discount of 21 *per cent.* But even if the honourable gentleman was desirous to confine himself to bills issued during the last period, and upon which he had calculated the extravagant interest to arise, he should take in the whole of the month of October. During that month, however, the average state of the discount was 10l. *per cent.* In order to colour as high as possible the gloomy and melancholy picture which he drew of the state of credit, he had formed his statement upon the highest day of that period as the rate of discount for the whole of the month. When the terms of a bargain were discussing, the object of which was to remove out of the market that quantity of floating securities which the honourable gentleman had represented as the very cause of that evil which he described in such strong colours, it was to have been expected that these objections would have been waved. The principle itself was far from being denied, and the measure derived support from the very manner in which it had been condemned. To discover the real advantage which the holders of the bills received, it was necessary to consider the whole of the subject. He had likewise prepared calculations upon this point, from the result of which the committee would be able to perceive what in reality had been the general rate of discount upon navy bills, for the period for which they were issued. They were to compare, then, the extremes of the lowest and highest; and the committee would be surprised to know, after the gloomy accounts they had heard, that the average of the discounts from October, 1795, to the end of October, 1796, was only 6 one-half *per cent.* The average of each month was likewise to be viewed along with the quantity issued each month, so that it appeared that the holders of the bills, so far from receiving at the rate of 103l. *per cent.* or according to the honourable gentleman's corrected statement, at the rate of 130l. *per cent.* received upon the bills, issued for that period no more than 6 1-half *per cent.* With regard to the difference which ought to be made between the persons holding bills for a greater or less space he would not at present argue. He should afterwards state what difference he had made. He wished, however, to recal the sentiments of the honourable gentleman upon this point, during former periods. When he had first entered into the situation which he now filled, when at the end

end of the American war, amidst the financial disorder which then prevailed, when for a period of five years the average discount upon navy bills had been higher than when the honourable gentleman himself had previously been in administration, and yet parliament had never been called on to prevent the necessity of so much floating securities, and to afford the supplies which had been raised by the issue of these bills, and he (Mr. Pitt) was called upon to fund that mass of unprovided debt, the idea of discrimination was violently opposed by the honourable gentleman, and he spoke with equal confidence and certainty of the blow which credit was to receive, as he did on the present occasion. It appeared, however, that the honourable gentleman had changed his opinion, and that the principles which he professed in 1784, did not apply in 1796, as they had done at the former period. The principle of discrimination which he had proposed to introduce, and had explained formerly, was one which policy dictated, if the propriety of funding was at all admitted. The honourable gentleman had talked of a *bonus* when the money was borrowed, and a *bonus* when it was to be paid. The point, however, stood shortly thus: Upon every 100*l.* which was issued in the way of navy bills, the holder, at the rate of 4 *per cent.* was to receive 105*l.* in fifteen months. To induce the holders to take a different species of security, it was necessary to give something more than the real value: if this slight advantage was not given, then the public incurred no additional expence, and unless the honourable gentleman maintained (what rather seemed to be the object of his argument to represent in a different light) that at the time when the bills became due, the state of the finances and of credit might be so improved that they might be discharged more advantageously, he could see no objection to the measure. He himself was inclined to think that the public credit and resources would at that future period be in so flourishing a state as to realize this supposition, and were it proper to speculate at all, he should speculate upon such an event. But if it might interfere with the exertions by which we were to be placed in that desirable situation, to allow the market to be depressed, and our resources fettered by such a quantity of floating securities, were to defeat the speculation, and to disappoint our prospects. But the honourable gentleman said, that he should not speculate on such a favourable state of our public situation, at such a period, and was inclined to hold out views of a less pleasing nature. If, however, these navy bills were to be paid at little more than the

rate

rate which the holders were entitled to receive at the end of fifteen months, the honourable gentleman cannot object to the measure, if he cannot prove that the advantage of paying just now, with the small additional temptation to the holder is compensated, by the saving which this difference would occasion. The honourable gentleman would not surely say that 6 *per cent.* for fourteen months, with a view to induce the holders to fall in with the plan, was an extravagant profit. The honourable gentleman said that the navy bills, notwithstanding the law by which they were to be paid in 15 months, had continued to experience a high discount. It surely, however, was not discreditable to have introduced a law, under the operation of which they had maintained their credit so well, compared with the state of depreciation they had experienced during the American war, and at other periods. It was said that more navy bills have been issued than he had stated to be necessary. The honourable gentleman, however, did not observe that the declaration to which he alluded, related to the balance of the navy debt, not to the balance of navy bills last year—two points very different. The latter would be paid from the supplies, and for which interest was provided. The navy then was not increased. Three millions had been stated last year as the navy debt, and four millions more might have arisen, so that the amount on the whole was seven millions. The honourable gentleman had said that parliament should have been assembled and called for the regular supplies, instead of issuing bills to such an amount. But what had the honourable gentleman himself done when he was a member of administration? Had he been of opinion that parliament should have been summoned, how could he reconcile it with the issue of four millions of navy bills in order to supply the wants of the public service? The whole excess however did not exceed what he had stated, though he was sorry that from unforeseen circumstances, it had not been sufficient to cover the whole of the demands. The present measure was in fact a progress towards removing from the market those floating securities which the honourable gentleman represented as so disadvantageous and towards the attainment of that object which he considered as necessary. With regard to the terms, it was asked, Whether advantage was to be taken of the alteration of the funds? That, however, was of very little importance. The fall arose from a general cause, though it was to be expected that before the new funded debt had properly diffused itself, some alteration in the stock
in

in which it was vested would take place—a circumstance which was foreseen and allowed by the holders, though he had not considered it of much weight. That fall, however, should be deducted from what was stated to be the *bonus* received by the holders. That *bonus* was extremely small, and of itself was a striking proof of the high estimation of our resources, and the general credit of our country. The honourable gentleman spoke with a degree of candour on another point, in which the former difference of opinion which subsisted between them seemed to be forgotten. Perhaps the animosity of the honourable gentleman had once displayed upon that subject was softened by time, and they now had approached more near to the opinions of each other. He did not imagine that the honourable gentleman had purposely abated somewhat of the strictness of a doctrine he had formerly held so keenly, when he had no longer the same motives to press it to the utmost extent, especially when he might find some advantage in the application of it on the present occasion. They indeed had not, it seems, differed so widely as they once imagined. This was with regard to the addition of capital, and the quantity of interest. The advantages and disadvantages of both modes of funding were such, in the honourable gentleman's opinion, that it was not easy to assign the limits in which they were to be taken. The honourable gentleman in expressing his opinion of the funding in the highest class, had not stated his objections with that vehemence which he had displayed on former occasions. The honourable gentleman had not recollected that the sinking fund had the effect to render it more eligible to add to the interest rather than to the capital, as it operated at once to the reduction of the mass of the debt, and to improve the general credit of the country. If the honourable gentleman himself found it difficult to determine how much interest should be given, it would not seem surprising to him that there were some difference in the proportions. The greatest variation was a fraction upon a point, which, the honourable gentleman had confessed, was not reduceable to any general principle. He could not therefore expect any great proportion between them, for the interests would vary in different degrees. Having stated so much, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he would not go farther into details, but should only desire the committee to bear in mind the points to which he had adverted, and the errors which he had exposed in the statements of the hon. gentleman. He had shewn that the calculations of the honourable gentleman

were exaggerated. He had proved that on former occasions, particularly after the conclusion of the last war, the discount upon navy bills had been 21 *per cent*, and that only 6½ was the general rate to which they had been depressed. He should therefore leave the committee to judge whether the measure deserved the reprobation which it had received, and with what consistency it proceeded from the hon. gentleman.

Mr. Fox said, that he had indeed stated the discount upon navy bills as unfavourable to the credit of the country; but his calculation of the enormous rate of 135l. *per cent*. which had been paid for money, he had produced as inferring blame upon those by whom it was given. He blamed ministers because they had borrowed money at such interest. He could not mean to represent the credit of the country sunk so low as that better terms could not be obtained, because then those who borrowed could not be blamed; but he reprobated their conduct because they had not prevented the necessity of such terms. He had not confined himself merely to the month of October, for reckoning to the 8th of November some part of September must be included. The proportion of the bills which fell under his calculation, however, was nearly a third. The honourable gentleman had taken October as his average month, but did the honourable gentleman seriously imagine that he had proved his point by taking this average; for during eight or ten days the intention of funding was known, and the credit of the navy bills recovered of course. He had never stated that holders of bills had in view a profit at the rate of 135l. *per cent*. but he had said that ministers were culpable in issuing bills when they knew that such a profit would be paid by the public. The honourable gentleman had alluded to an administration in which he (Mr. Fox) had the honour to be concerned, though he had no particular connection with the the financial department. Were navy bills then, however, in the same situation with that species of security now? At that time no interest began for six months, and there was no fixed period for their payment. With what propriety then could the honourable gentleman compare the state of navy bills then, with their situation under the existing regulation. The law by which they were limited to fifteen months had met with his approbation, and he should perhaps give his support to any proposal that tended still farther to limit the period of their circulation. He had said that this measure had not been efficacious, but this he conceived

was

was to be ascribed to the magnitude of the evil, to which the remedy was inadequate. But the different situation in which navy bills now stood took away from the honourable gentleman all advantage from the comparison he had made. During the American war navy bills often ran two and sometimes three years. The honourable gentleman had alluded to the discrimination which he had opposed when the navy bills were to be funded at the end of the American war. He had objected, because at that time the only security which the holder had possessed was that he should be paid previous to any bills of a subsequent date to those he held, and because it was proposed in order to induce them to agree to the terms of funding, they were to have no preference over those who accepted the terms, and of course their payment might have been deferred till a new war, or some other circumstance, rendered a new issue of navy bills necessary. Upon this the point had been abandoned. The honourable gentleman, who displayed the same magnanimity in receding as in advancing, had given up his point but retained his opinion. He had stated that the opposition had proceeded from the most factious spirit, and in abandoning his plan he imputed it entirely to the idle clamour which faction had excited. The holders of the bills at this time, however, possess all the security of the country, and are entitled to be paid at the expiration of fifteen months. This he admitted was an improvement in finance. The honourable gentleman had said that he had depreciated the number of navy bills, yet had refused his assent to the measure by which the number was to be decreased. He confessed that he reprobated this unsystematic mode of proceeding. He did not think it was necessary to get rid of them on bad terms and he conceived it to be of little importance what advantage the holders got in the bargain, if the honourable gentleman knew that it was to be paid. Though he did not know when the idea of funding these bills had first occurred, he did not imagine it was quite new, and it was easy to conceive what advantage individuals might have made by knowing that the measure was to take place. He did not imagine, however, that the honourable gentleman, would give opportunity for such a speculation, neither did he think so ill of the credit of the country, even under all the pressure of this expensive war, and under the management of its present finance ministers, nor did he think the payment of interest at the rate of 130 *per cent.* had any thing to do with this point, yet he saw

little subject of consolation in perceiving that navy bills had laboured under a permanent depression of $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. which with their usual interest amounted to more than 10 per cent. As to our credit it was liable to be affected by continuing in a system of expence out of proportion to our means. That the issuing of navy bills to such an extent affected credit he firmly believed, and he should willingly concur in any measure by which the practice was still farther regulated and confined. These applications, however, were not radical. To limit them to six, or even three months, would not do if the quantity continued to be increased, and the money of the country to be diminished. These remedies were ineffectual because they did not reach the root. They did not produce any apparent influence, because they were not equal to the rapid encrease, and confirmed inveteracy of the evil. It was said that $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. was no great bonus. He on the other hand thought it too much. It was said you must give something. He saw not the least necessity for it. Here there was no advance of money. If the bill was worth so much, they could keep it; if they wanted money, they got another exchangeable security *at par*. He did not think that any premium should have been necessary to induce men to part with an exchangeable security, at a discount, for another *at par*, and if the holder would not agree, it could only be on speculation that other bills would be issued, from which they would derive some ultimate advantage. On any other view the bargain must be favourable. The honourable gentleman had said that he (Mr. Fox) had come nearer him upon the point of funding by capital or interest, but that he still pushed his opinion as far as ever. He had never maintained his opinion in extremes. It was not necessary, however, to go back to former differences, for the same observations applied either as to the quantity of interest or the encrease of capital. It was true that he had said that it was difficult to ascertain the proportion of interest which should be held to the proportion of capital, but yet it was well known in arithmetic and mathematics that the relations of quantities might be ascertained, from this he thought the latter might be discovered. Upon this ground he had arraigned the difference of interests in proportion to capital. He had been accused of presenting gloomy highly coloured views of our situation. It was not, however, the question, whether they were gloomy, but whether they were true, and whether they were not fitted to call the attention of the committee to the subject. What he had stated

stated was not to depreciate our credit, but as facts by which we were to judge of our situation, and to examine the conduct of ministers. We were in reality come to this, that the remedies that had been employed had little effect, because they were not equal to the evil, regulations were unable to confine us within even the worst precedents of former times. These must now be given up as hopeless, and something more efficacious attempted. Though the honourable gentleman called his calculations extravagant, he had not attempted to confute them, and what he had stigmatized as overcharged colouring, he had never ventured to deny. What he had mentioned went to a very alarming extent. The country should not be contented with the answer—that our means were powerful and our resources great. The necessity of effective exertions was held out, but what rational hope could be entertained that our resources would supply the ability? It was admitted that the balance of debt on the navy bills was five millions more than the honourable gentleman had calculated. That was a sufficient foundation for all objections that had been made. Before the end of the year, if it went on in the same proportion, an additional excess of three millions would be incurred. In December, the honourable gentleman had stated that 1,500,000*l.* would probably be the amount. In April and May, he stated four millions, and now it was admitted to be seven millions. The whole survey of the war, and the financial expedients that had been employed, proved, that it had been in vain to attempt by any remedies to stop the evil arising from the increase of the quantity of navy bills. All this shewed that palliatives would no longer do, that it was necessary to strike at the root, to compare our resources with our expenditure, that we might be enabled to support those exertions, which, in the case of a farther prosecution of the war, we might be called upon to make.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer replied, that it was totally unnecessary for him to trouble the committee, for the different parts of the right honourable gentleman's speech answered each other. In one part he had contended, that the excess of interest paid on navy bills was a proof of the bad state of the credit of the country. In another he had asserted, that the great interest given was not owing to any want of credit in the country, but to his (Mr. Pitt's) want of skill as a finance minister.

The right honourable gentleman had then complained that he (Mr. Pitt) knowing his intention of funding these bills

bills, had made a disadvantageous bargain; and the next moment he admitted, that there was no means of making that intention public without parliament was fitting; so that it was impossible for him to act in such a manner as to avoid the right hon. gentleman's objections.

Mr. Fox said a few words in explanation.

Mr. Milbank mentioned that he had heard, that navy bills had been at 16l. *per cent.* discount, and he wished to be informed how such a circumstance was compatible with the description which had been given of the flourishing state of the country. He considered it as a fair question; he expected that he would receive an explicit answer.

No answer was given.

The committee then divided upon the resolution.

<i>Ayes</i>	-	208
<i>Noes</i>	-	48

<i>Majority</i>	160
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It was also moved and resolved,

That towards making good the supply granted to his Majesty there be issued and applied the sum of 420,000l. of the money now remaining in the exchequer, being the disposable overplus of the grants for the year 1796.

The House being resumed, and the order of the day for taking into farther consideration the report of the militia Bill being read, and a motion being made for recommitting the Bill,

Mr. Curwen rose to oppose it. He said, that if there was any danger of an invasion, it was the duty of the minister to lay before parliament the information upon which he conceived that danger to rest, before a step at once so novel and so oppressive as that proposed by the Bill then before the House was adopted. They had heard of threats in France to make such an attempt, but he wished to know if government was in possession of any information respecting preparations to carry these threats into execution. The alarm which had been so industriously raised, had not produced one sensation in the country, and he trusted that parliament would exercise caution and suspicion over the schemes of administration, and not perpetuate the system of delusion, which had already been so successfully practised, for the purposes of innovation and oppression. It appeared the more strange that such measures should be proposed, at the moment a negotiation was on foot, the favourable termination of which he earnestly hoped that nothing would occur to obstruct, at least on the part of this country. The question was simple—did

—did danger really exist or not? if it did, let preparations for averting it be made, to any extent, but let evidence of the existence of the danger be produced, to justify the preparation. If there was no actual danger, parliament ought to be cautious how they sanctioned such a measure as the present, a measure which would cost the nation little less than three millions sterling. Was this what an honourable baronet (Sir. W. Pulteney) on a former night called only a half measure? He should like to know what he meant by the phrase. If the country was really in danger, he was convinced that it was prepared to resist it to its full extent, but let not its resources be wasted in idle preparations to combat a phantom which had no existence. He was aware that there were occasions on which some confidence in ministers was allowable and necessary: but was this one of them? What could contribute more to excite the spirit of the country than to inform the people of their danger? He must indeed know little of the character of Englishmen who could suppose that they could be intimidated by any information which they could receive upon such a subject. While they remained without that information, the schemes of ministers, from their former conduct, were extremely liable to suspicion. For one he confessed that he had neither confidence in their wisdom, nor reliance on their honesty. And in order to eradicate those prejudices which their former conduct had implanted, he thought it was necessary that they should communicate to the House every information which it was in their power to convey. He was convinced for his own part, that the exertions which they were now calling upon the country to make, were for another purpose than that which was avowed, and the policy of which might be much doubted. It was not long since a right honourable gentleman, not then present (Mr. Dundas,) had boasted that the state of the country was such as to defy all the attacks of every enemy which could combine against its safety. He wished to know what had happened since to make it less formidable or less secure. Was there any decrease of loyalty, or had its naval and military strength decayed? There was a time, and it was an awful moment to this country, when every one suspected his neighbour, and calculated the numbers of the disaffected as suited his purposes. But the panic was only of temporary duration; our enemies were undeceived, and our ministers exposed to the contempt of Europe. We were next threatened with a famine, the fear of which had been happily removed by the return of plenty. And now the alarm of an invasion

was

was raised. But how was the country situated? The measures of the minister were little opposed without, and less within doors. Though he had proved himself incapable of discharging any part of his duty as a minister, and though he had involved the country in defeat and disgrace, yet he met with general support. The state of the continent certainly was not so alarming as it had been at some former periods, and our navy was represented in his Majesty's speech to have blocked up the enemy's fleets in their own ports for a great part of the year. Upon what then did our fears of invasion rest? He was not disposed to quarrel with this or that measure, all he wished was to have some information respecting the necessity of adopting any measure. If this information was given he would readily give his support to any plan which would be most effectual for averting the calamity, but if ministers persisted in withholding it, he should consider himself as justified in opposing every part of the system.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that it was far from his intentions to detain the House from manifesting that disposition which then would certainly feel upon the present occasion, to act up to that solemn pledge which they had given on a former night, to neglect no measure to prevent or to repel the danger to which the country was exposed from the threatened invasion. He thought that every man in the House, (even the honourable gentleman who spoke last,) when they gave this assurance in an address presented to the throne by the unanimous vote of the House, did not consider it as mere words of form, but that there could have been nothing more pointed, more definitive, and more sincere than the idea which this assurance conveyed. What had occurred since this pledge was given, he was at a loss to know. He believed it was the first time in the history of the country that when danger from an external foe was announced in the speech from the throne, that the subject had been made the matter of parliamentary detail. On the former evening the House seemed to be sensible of the impossibility of his Majesty's ministers communicating to the public the proofs of the existence of the danger of which they might be in possession. Every person appeared to be satisfied with the assurance which was then given, that government was in possession of documents to warrant his Majesty in making such a communication in his gracious speech; and after the communication had been made from such a quarter, he did not expect its authority would have been questioned, nor was it

it conveyed in the language of coldness or indifference. They had been told by those in a responsible situation that ministers knew enough from intelligence to which they gave credit, to render it necessary for them to apprize the country of its danger, and to call upon it, to exert its means of defence. A right hon. friend of his (Mr. Secretary Dundas), who was absent from illness that evening, had stated his conviction, that from the statement which he had heard of the actual preparations which were making in France, apparently for the purpose of invading this country, that there was just ground for alarm, and that the necessity of adopting measures for our internal defence was extremely pressing. Was this the language of coldness and indifference, much less of hesitation and doubt? If any thing had been wanting to convince him of the reality of the danger, every thing which had occurred from that day to this, strengthened his apprehensions. At present he neither felt it safe nor practicable to enter into any detail of the sources of his information, and after what he had advanced he would not insult the feelings of the House so far as to enter into any argument upon the subject. After what he knew respecting the preparations which were making for putting the design into execution, he should have considered himself as guilty of the highest crime against his sovereign and the country, had he neglected to call upon parliament to exercise its wisdom in devising those measures which might tend to avert the threatened attempt, or to turn it to the ruin and confusion of the enemy. The honourable gentleman distrusted the sincerity of the alarm. He (Mr. Pitt) was disposed to pay the less deference to this suspicion, on account of the explanation with which it was accompanied. He affected to distrust the present alarm because he was of opinion that an alarm was false, which nine-tenths of the nation, and a great majority of parliament believed to be true. He demanded evidence—but what degree of evidence would satisfy him who would not yield assent to proofs which convinced nine-tenths of the nation? The honourable gentleman was somewhat inconsistent in the censures which he passed upon ministers, and in the effects which he represented their measures as having produced. He accused them of having invaded the constitution, oppressed and ruined the country, and with the same breath he admitted that they had the unanimous support of that country which they had ruined, and of those people whom they had oppressed. He talked of the danger of taking those precautions which had been proposed to prevent

an invasion; what was this when compared with the danger on the other side? Mr. Pitt professed to have such a thorough conviction of the patriotic zeal and manly feeling of the House that he would not detain them one moment longer, from giving their sanction to a measure upon which the safety and security of the country so much depended.

Mr. Fox said, "I rise to make some observations upon the doctrines that have fallen from the right honourable gentleman who has just sat down; doctrines, which if they be true, we had better do that in words, which the present administration have been constantly doing in actions; we had better declare that the constitution of the country is good only for praise and for oratorical flourish, but that it is not proper for a state of warfare; we had better say that when ministers have brought the country into peril, that peril is a sufficient ground for confidence in them, and that when they have involved us in difficulty and danger, it is the business of the people to surrender all their vigilance, to repose complete faith in them, or in other words, to suspend the constitution, and to make the government of the country an armed monarchy. We are told that it is enough for the king to tell us that a danger exists, and for us to declare that if it exists, we will put the country in a situation to resist it; we are told, I say, that it is enough for us to pledge ourselves at once to such Bills as these; Bills which impose upon the people greater pecuniary burthens than any that were ever imposed for any purpose of government; this however we are informed we must do, or forfeit our pledge to the King; Sir, the speech of the King, I shall always consider, and it is usual so to consider it, as the speech of the minister. They tell us there is a danger of an invasion; I may be willing for a time to suspend any enquiry into the causes that have involved us in this difficulty and disgrace. I may be willing to suspend for a time an enquiry into the conduct of those who have brought us into the danger; but must I not know what it is? Must the mere bringing us into danger be of itself a sufficient claim to confidence? For one, I am of opinion that from external causes there is no particular apprehension of an invasion; but still more am I of opinion that if, under the pretence of strengthening the country, ministers are only doing as they formerly have done, (in 1784) strengthening themselves in their influence and power; if they are expressing their apprehensions of danger only to extend the one and confirm the other, why then I should hesitate whether I would apply any remedy at all; but even
should

should the danger really exist, I should hesitate much before I applied such a remedy as this. We are not, Sir, so young in the House as to imagine that, because we approve of the speech from the throne, we pledge ourselves to all the measures which the minister may think proper to adopt, or that the vote we came to, upon the first day of this session, bound us to pass such Bills as these. With respect to the Bills, I see some clauses more objectionable in their principle and provisions than others. Sir, the calling upon so many men in the country, the putting them under martial law, and under officers of the crown, without those safeguards which are contained in the old Militia Acts, and at a time when the erection of barracks all over the country evinces the system of separating the soldiery from the people, and according to the ingenious reasoning of some gentlemen, making the people deaf if they cannot be made dumb. Sir, the doing of these things is a grievous hardship and a heavy burthen. It is no light thing to make the people imbibe military notions and military prejudices under officers of the crown, without any of those checks and guards, which I repeat it, are contained in the former regulations relative to the militia. It has been too much the fashion to forget old prejudices and old principles; Sir, I have no difficulty, much as the term has been ridiculed in confessing myself an alarmist; I am alarmed at the situation of the country; I believe that there is a faction in it, whose wish and endeavour are to increase the power of the crown, at the expence of the liberties of the people; I believed it in common, once, with those who are now converts from that belief; who think now that ministers, whose measures they formerly so much reprobated, are so satiated with power, so glutted with patronage and emoluments, as to have lost all those marks and features that rendered them the objects of their former dread and detestation. I am not one of these; I am not one who has lost the greater in the lesser evil, and good God! what is this lesser evil? the fear of the liberties and rights of the people being swallowed up in the power of the crown! With these feelings about me, can I be brought to think that raising such a force, as that proposed by the bill, is not a most alarming circumstance, to which nothing short of the necessity of risking every thing could reconcile me? And now a word or two on the bills themselves; and first, with respect to the present bill, by which men are to be raised in the different parishes. Without entering into the policy of the bill, I must contend that the general burden will be very, very considerable.

able. Do I mean to contend by this that burdens ought not to be laid in times of difficulty and peril? No; but there is an object stronger than this: if we are now to provide against an existing danger, we are not to provide against a general danger, but against a specific danger of an invasion of Great Britain by the enemy. Such is my opinion. Why then, I say, it gives me no good idea of the present ministers, when I see them always bringing forward false pretences. When I see them, under these bills, providing that the different parishes shall raise men not for the specific purpose of resisting an invasion, but for general military purposes; when I see this, I must think that the real motive of the measure is not for domestic service, but for the purpose of carrying on offensive war abroad; and in this opinion I am a good deal influenced by what fell from a right honourable gentleman high in office. I do not like to quote the words of any gentleman in his absence, but, sir, words that drop from ministers are not in the nature of expressions from common men; they come with authority and in an official shape. I cannot forget that right honourable gentleman's speech on a former night, when he said that the present plan was adviseable, inasmuch as it would enable his Majesty's ministers to prosecute the war abroad. If this be the fact, I would advise gentlemen not to be so active in their approbation of the measure. Do not be so impatient, as the right honourable gentleman has recommended to you, in your support. You will have opportunities enough of voting hundreds, thousands, and millions, I have no doubt, for carrying on offensive war abroad. This, therefore, is what I complain of; and I cannot help thinking it to be one of those pretences which ministers do not believe, but which they bring forward in order to get strength for purposes which they do not chuse to state. The bill for raising a force of cavalry is objectionable in all its shapes. If an invasion were certain, I should object to it as impracticable and tyrannical, and as tending to lay such enormous taxes upon the people, as are almost intolerable. And at what period are we called upon for such taxes? before the minister has opened what is usually called his budget. When I consider the conversation that has passed this day, and the excess that has occurred in our expenditure, have I not ample reason to suppose that we shall in the ensuing budget be called upon to bear burdens equally heavy, at least with any that have been laid upon us in any former year of the war? When to those burdens, the burden that will be imposed upon the country by this bill for the raising an additional

tional force of cavalry is added, I feel that I cannot consent to it without trying if any other measure can be adopted less heavy in its operation, and equally effectual in its consequences. The right honourable gentleman in recurring to what fell from my honourable friend (Mr. Curwen) has alluded to his disbelief of the present alarm, because all former alarms propagated by ministers have been proved to be false. The right honourable gentleman contends that that disbelief is against evidence, and contrary to the opinion of nine-tenths of the people. Sir, I remember when an enquiry into the existence or non-existence of any cause for alarms was demanded, by an honourable friend of mine (Mr. Sheridan), that demand was refused. Should that enquiry ever be entered into, I will maintain that it not only will be found that no reason existed for any alarm, but that ministers, when they called out the militia, and summoned the parliament, in 1792, disbelieved the alarm themselves. Sir, that measure of calling out the militia, and summoning the parliament, will be a measure to be deplored to the latest posterity. It occasioned more rivers of blood to be shed, and more treasure to be expended, than ever were shed or expended during the reign of that despot Louis XIV, or all the civil wars that ever existed. On the subject of alarms, a great deal of ingenuity, and I think misapplied ingenuity, has been exerted on different occasions. Some gentlemen were alarmed about the operation of French principles, and the consequences that would result in this country from the French victories. That being mere matter of reasoning, I have candour enough to believe, that though the danger appeared to me to be very trifling, if any existed at all, yet that persons who entertained those apprehensions were sincere; but that is not the alarm we are speaking of. I am speaking of the calling the regiments to the capital, and the fortifying of the Tower, as if an immediate insurrection were apprehended. Since that period, many innocent men have been arraigned by his Majesty's government for high treason. However certain persons may be inclined to blame the want of diligence in the crown lawyers; I think no complaint will be urged against them for not bringing forward an ample body of evidence, particularly of evidence of a distant date, for I believe witnesses were adduced to facts anterior to the period when the parliament was called, the militia embodied, and the insurrection apprehended. Yet though these lawyers had access to all the sources of government—though they ransacked and rummaged all the records possessed by administration, yet they never produced a
single

single proof (I do not say to satisfy themselves) yet they never produced a single proof to satisfy the jury, that when the Tower was fortified, there were in any of those desperate traitors such projects of insurrection as those that have been alluded to. I did not think that I should have been under the necessity of entering into these particulars this day; but when the right hon. gentleman says that our belief is contrary to the belief of nine-tenths of the people, it becomes incumbent upon me to maintain that no solid ground of alarm existed at the time when these extraordinary precautions were taken. I wish gentlemen to refer to the trials for high treason—I wish gentlemen to read them, and tell me if they find the slightest trace of that insurrection, so affected to be dreaded, in December, 1792. Upon these trials some have written, that they are the disgrace of the country; others have said that they contribute to its honour. Strange as it may seem, I agree in both those opinions—I think that they were disgraceful.

[Here Mr. *Yorke* interrupted Mr. Fox, and spoke to order. the right honourable gentleman was, he conceived, wandering from the subject in debate, and if he descended to those particulars which he had just mentioned, it would be impossible to get through the debate that night.]

The *Speaker* said, he conceived Mr. Fox to be perfectly in order, it appeared to him that Mr. Fox was consistent in alluding to the trials for high treason. The right honourable gentleman had been stating the danger to be ideal, and he was illustrating that position by a reference to those trials; at the same time the Speaker thought himself bound to declare that Mr. Fox had been rather too particular upon some of those points to which he had alluded; but as on the whole the right honourable gentleman appeared to have confined himself, within the scope of his argument, he had not thought it necessary to interrupt him.

Mr. Fox in continuation. I am not quite satisfied with the mode in which I was called to order. We have not yet imbibed such a detestation of equality, as not to have some regard for impartiality, and we have not yet established the custom of deciding by a stroke of a hammer or a sound of a bell at what particular hour the debate shall be closed. I should not have alluded to the trials, had not an allusion to them been provoked by what fell from the right honourable gentleman opposite to me. Our belief of the alarms is said to be contrary to the opinion of nine-tenths of the people, I do not think so; but if it were contrary to the belief not only of nine-tenths, but of nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand

thousand, I should be still equally inclined to declare my opinion; but I should augur very ill indeed of the people, if I thought that they could resist such evidence as was adduced upon the trials. Perhaps I flatter myself that I am not in such a minority as the right honourable gentleman supposes. What I am in this House, I know not. What I am in the country, I am equally ignorant of; but I do know, that if I speak of that part of the country which I am best acquainted with, I have the good fortune to agree in opinion with a decided majority. When I was called to order, I was observing, that there was no ground for the original alarm in the year 1792. I was going to remark upon those trials, that the prosecution of innocent men was disgraceful to the country, and their acquittal honourable. How comes it that so many were acquitted? Because so many were prosecuted who ought not to have been prosecuted. Sorry I am, that I shall frequently have occasion to offend the honourable gentleman who called me to order, if recurring to past actions, in order to form my opinion of the future, be against the established rules of the House. The country, I allow, is in a situation of great difficulty, in a situation of danger, cruel danger, but not so much from any apprehension of an invasion on the part of the enemy; it is in a state of peril from which there is no way to extricate it, but by a retrospective view of the measures of ministers, and an enquiry and judicial examination of their conduct. I have stated that the three bills are doubtful measures, even supposing extraordinary measures to be necessary. In 1794, after the great arming of the country, we were told, that it was sufficient to resist any invasion that might be attempted; what is the situation of the country now; an honourable friend of mine states, that it is in a state of great internal quiet. In this opinion, as in most others, I perfectly agree with him, if he means that there is in the country a general love for the constitution; I have no doubt of it; the people are universally well affected to the constitution, I believe; but that they are more attached to the constitution as it is now, than as it was at the commencement of the war, I cannot allow. I cannot believe that I am one of those 80,000 incorrigible Jacobins*, whom nothing can reconcile to the monarchy of this country; so far from thinking their number to be so formidable, I believe that it

* In allusion to an assertion of Mr. Burke in his recently published Two Letters to a Member of Parliament.

will be difficult to find one. If those are *incorrigible Jacobins*, who detest the measures of his Majesty's ministers, who think that their entrance into the war was dishonourable, and who are of opinion that their conduct has tarnished the glory of the country; that they have conducted pusillanimously what they entered into rashly; who think that not only an enquiry into their conduct is indispensable, but that a reform is absolutely necessary, in order to prevent the country from being cursed with such ministers as the present, if any such can ever curse the country; if these are the *incorrigible Jacobins*, I am glad to hear that they amount to eighty thousand. I wish they amounted to eight millions. The right honourable gentleman, who states that there is so much necessity for going into the committee, does not disdain, however, to give us some information. He says, that his apprehensions of the danger of an invasion are increased lately, and he said this in so emphatic a way, that I, for one, do not wish to press an opposition to the measure. If the minister really thinks that there is any danger of an invasion, I will not object to some increase of the militia force; but even in that case, I will only suspend my enquiry into the causes that have brought us into this danger. The right honourable gentleman, however, must be aware, that if an invasion is likely to be attempted in England, one system of measures will be necessary, which will not apply, if the invasion is likely to be attempted in another part. Let the minister state this, in order that the means may be adapted to the different cases. Suppose, for example, that Jamaica was in danger of being invaded, you would hardly think it necessary to adopt any precaution in Great Britain; the same observation will apply to parts nearer home. If any other part of the British territories is in danger, the measures calculated to repel that danger ought to be applied to that part. In observing upon the speech of my honourable friend (Mr. Curwen) the right honourable gentleman said, with a kind of triumphant air, that he confessed the general support of the people to the government. I heard distinctly what my honourable friend said, and I conceived him to express his opinion, not that there was a general support of the measures of his Majesty's ministers throughout the country, but a general indifference; whether this is the same thing, I leave to the right honourable gentleman to decide. He must know that his only chance of support is from the indifference and inattention of the country, and from their natural consequence, ignorance. Such kind of support, however as this can hardly I should think

think, be as cordial and satisfactory to his feelings, as that which is the result of judgment and the effect of deliberation. When I consider the basis upon which the constitution stands, I confess that I am far from liking this indifference. I hope it does not exist to any great extent, for sure I am, that the best security against an invasion will consist not in the indifference of the country, but in its zeal, its firmness, and its unanimity. I understand the right honourable gentleman to say that there is a real danger; a miserable assertion this, by the way, for the House to proceed upon alone; but, however, the danger we are told is real. That such is the case, is matter of serious concern. Of the ultimate issue of any attempt at an invasion, I am as sanguine as his majesty's speech expresses; but I shall be more sanguine, in proportion as I see the people less indifferent to the constitution, as the minister found it not as he has made it. With respect to the bill in question, I do not object upon the declaration of the right honourable gentleman to the recommitment of it; but unless it be materially altered in the committee, I cannot consent to the passing of it, because I do not think that it contains remedies adequate to the evil. The measure, as far as I have been able to learn, creates much alarm. I think it liable to objections, and I feel that I should not do my duty if I did not state those objections. The other Bills appear to be defective in principle, and I cannot see any amendments that can reconcile me to them. One word more. The right honourable gentleman says, that great danger threatens us. I agree with him in calling upon the people to resist an invasion on the part of France. Resist it, I say, with all your might. Be unanimous in your exertions: be vigorous in your efforts: draw your purses freely: contribute your personal labours cheerfully. But when I call upon the people to repel any attempt that may be made by France, I also call upon them not to be so alarmed at the danger as not to adopt such measures afterwards as may make the struggle beneficial to themselves. Let them not struggle against France, only to yield to the artifices of the present ministers. My advice to them is, be vigilant, be watchful against foreign and domestick enemies; but learn who those domestick enemies are; you were in prosperity, you are now reduced to adversity; do not believe those to be your friends by whom you were so reduced. It would be a paradox, indeed, if you could be involved in such distress, without some blame imputable to his Majesty's ministers. Suffer not yourselves to be deluded by the miserable

sophistry that was used in the American war; that ministers governed you the best, but that an opposition, represented to be feeble in point of weight with the country, destroyed the efficacy of all the measures adopted by the ministers. Be vigilant! be watchful! I repeat, against both foreign and domestic enemies! Remember that you may be brought to this paradoxical state, and that it is impossible for a minister to conduct the affairs of a nation so ill, and to reduce you to such a condition, as to make it necessary to place some degree of confidence in him. Let us look to our situation now; we must trust that some system of error, some glaring faults, may by a fortunate event, be attended with beneficial consequences; we must hope that that which produced the mischief may produce the remedy. It has been said of some animals, that they cure themselves by their own bites—we must look to some such fabulous system. But this is too much to expect from fortune, and I hope that we may not be reduced to so disastrous a dilemma.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he should not attempt to reply, because he knew that would be irregular, and he wished it the less, since, from the observations he had heard, he was convinced he should hear many of them again, when it would be regular for him to answer them. There were, however, two points for him to answer, in doing which he should confine himself strictly to explanation. The first inferior to the second. The right honourable gentleman who had just spoken, had complained of a misrepresentation of the words of his honourable friend, as to the opinion of the majority of the people of this country. He confessed he thought that honourable gentleman had brought forward that opinion as a proof of the security we had against an invasion. The other point was much more important. He meant that which arose out of the observations of the right honourable gentleman who spoke last, which was, that by the means he had of information, subsequent to the meeting of parliament, he was now enabled to state distinctly, so as to convey his apprehension of serious danger of an attempt being made by the enemy to effect an invasion in some part or other of these kingdoms. In some part of this island; the particulars of which he would not depart from his duty so far as to state, or even to discuss, for that was not the place to discuss it. How far it was possible for him to know, unless the authors of the plan had communicated to him the design, the House would judge; precisely in what part he did not know, nor should

should he communicate if he did; nor to what part the preparations were directed; nor could he alledge how far one attempt was meant to be serious, and another for diversion. How far some part was to be attempted seriously at all, and what were the means particularly to be employed he would not tell. These were particulars he would not state, nor form a just opinion of them. The danger however, he thought was on foot; and therefore we ought to look for the security of this island, and to the security of the other parts not much inferior in consequence to us—the security of every part of his Majesty's European possessions.

Mr. *Curwen* said, that after the right honourable gentleman's explanation, he should not think it his duty to press further his opposition to the House going into a committee; but at the same time he considered that he had a right to receive some information of a general nature as to the extent of the enemy's hostile preparations, as a guide to his vote on this important occasion.

Sir *James Pulteney* declared it was not his intention to prevent the House from going into the committee on the bill immediately; he only meant to say, that there did appear to him to be real danger, and that the project of an invasion was probably in the contemplation of the enemy. This intelligence he had acquired from conversation with persons who possessed the means of information. Some gentlemen had stated that much time would be required to fit out an armament against Great Britain, most certainly there would, and it was also necessary that time should be given for raising a force in this country to resist an invasion. Besides, from her extensive coast and numerous ports, France might fit out an expedition against us in a shorter time than we could complete an armament for defence. Immediate measures appeared to him to be necessary. Gentlemen he observed, had asked, why is the danger greater now than in former years of the war? The danger is rendered more pressing by the extinction of the internal commotions in La Vendee and other parts of the interior of France, which formerly afforded the French no possibility of entertaining any idea of an invasion. A worthy baronet (Sir William Pulteney) had said the other night, that the measure did not go far enough. In that opinion he was inclined to acquiesce.

Mr. *Fox* asked across the table in what manner it was intended to proceed with the report.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that if the House agreed to the measure by adopting the present bill, he thought not a

moment should be lost, but that this and the other bills should be passed as speedily as possible. For this purpose, and to avoid objections to any minute matters in detail, he proposed to pass them merely in the outline, with a clause in each, empowering the House to amend any part or parts of them, at any time during the present session. If the committee go through with this bill that night, he should propose the report to be taken into consideration, and the bill read a third time the next day. And also that the two other bills be committed the next day, unless any important objection should happen to arise. He begged, while he was on the subject, to say a few words on the bill for embodying gamekeepers, which had been greatly misunderstood. It had been supposed that they were to be embodied and called out to be trained as the other parts of the militia-men were; but the case was otherwise, for as they were already very expert in the use of the musket, there would be no occasion to call them out, till an invasion should actually take place, when they would be found a very useful body of men.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, *November 1.*

The annual land and malt tax bills were read a third time and passed.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, *November 1.*

The call of the House which stood for this day was not enforced.

A ballot took place to form a committee for trying the merits of the election for the Borough of Southwark.

A ballot also took place to try the merits of the election for Malmesbury, in Wiltshire.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, gave notice of a proposition for taking into consideration a certain number of election petitions previous to the recess, which he meant to bring forward the next day.

The report of the committee of ways and means was brought up.

Mr. *Fox* rested his arguments against the proportions of the interest to the capital in the terms on which the navy bills were to be funded in the different classes; to which the
Chancellor

Chancellor of the Exchequer replied, and the report was then read and agreed to, with the amendments.

Mr. *Biddulph* said he was afraid that very considerable inconvenience might arise from any delay in the consideration of election petitions. It was essential to the purity of the representation of the people that these petitions should be soon determined, and he was afraid that the proposition of which the honourable gentleman had given notice, would have the effect to prolong this decision.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that his object was to remove the inconveniencies which arose from the delay of which the honourable gentleman complained.

SUPPLEMENTAL MILITIA BILL.

On the report of this Bill, several amendments were proposed, and adopted.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* introduced a clause to exempt the persons belonging to the Artillery company and the Cinque-Port corps from the operation of the bill, together with several other associated corps. With respect to training the men after they should be embodied, he suggested the propriety of training greater or lesser parts of the several corps in different places throughout the kingdom, in proportion to the greater or lesser degrees of labour which persons in these places might have to attend to; and an amendment to that effect was brought up, and agreed to.

On the clause proposing that the operation of the bill should continue during the war, and three months after,

Mr. *Sheridan* said that he saw no reason why the bill should be continued not only during the whole of the war, but three months after its conclusion. It was probable that the war might still be protracted long after any alarm of invasion had ceased. This bill was only intended to secure the country from the dangers of invasion. He should therefore propose that the Bill should only continue in force two months after the meeting of next session of parliament.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* replied, that when once the men had been trained for twenty days, the hardship with respect to them ceased. It could be no inconvenience to retain them on the footing proposed by the bills. To keep them when once ballotted in readiness to be called out in case of emergency during the continuance of the war, might, however, be a source of additional strength and confidence to the country. If, contrary to the supposition of the honourable gentleman, a case of actual danger should arise after the period

at

at which he proposed to disband them, some measure must be taken, either to continue their services for a longer time, or have recourse to a new enrolment, and on either supposition there might be some degree of difficulty and delay.

Mr. Fox said, that at least he saw no reason why their services should be continued for so long a period as three months after the conclusion of the war; all apprehensions of danger, and, consequently, the necessity for keeping them on foot, might surely be obviated within a short time.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* agreed that the space of three months was not absolutely necessary, and that a period of one month might be sufficient for every purpose of security.

The amendment of one month was accordingly adopted.

On the clause allowing men with a certain number of children to act as substitutes,

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said that this clause was framed on the same principle as the clause inserted in the Bill, taking away from men who had children their former privilege to be exempted from the ballot to serve as militiamen. The emergency of the case, and the extent of the service, seemed in both instances to require that no exemption should be made.

Mr. *Sheridan* remarked in consequence of this clause, a man might be tempted to forsake the habits of sober honesty, to accept the bounty to serve as a substitute, and abandon his children to the care of the parish.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* replied, that such a case could scarcely occur under the operation of the present Bills. First, the man was only to be absent from his family for twenty days, during the period he was to be trained, and it could hardly be supposed that within so short a time his habits should be completely depraved, and his natural affections extinguished. Secondly, the pay he would receive during those twenty days was nearly adequate to the rate of labour, and the additional bounty would enable him to make an adequate provision for his family during his absence.

Mr. *Sheridan* asked, what was the operation of the Bill? Were not the men liable to be called out and embodied in a state of imminent danger, and so long as the war continued, what security had they that they should not every moment be taken from their occupations, and separated from their families?

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, there was a distinction which he would recommend to the honourable gentleman's notice.

notice. When we had taken the proper means of precaution, and arranged our plan of defence, on the first intelligence of danger, the necessary force could be collected. It was proper that force should be kept in readiness, but it by no means followed that it should be always in action. We ought not to confound the necessity of providing against the danger, and the necessity of subjecting the additional corps that were raised to act in case of emergency, to the strictness of constant and unremitting duty.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, he found from this qualification of the right honourable gentleman, that he did not consider the present situation of the country as a state of imminent danger; and so far he weakened his own argument.

After a few words from Sir *W. Young*, Mr. *Burden*, Mr. *Yorke*, and Mr. *Baker*, the clause passed without any amendment.

Mr. *Sheridan* then came forward with a proposition which he would state in as few words as possible. His object was to move an amendment in the Bill, for the purpose of doing away a distinction which he conceived to be odious and unjust. It was one of those distinctions, however, which he could wish to be done away rather gradually and quietly than by any clamour of debate. The distinction to which he alluded was excluding persons from a share in the defence of their country, in consequence of a difference of religions. In the oath taken by those who served in the militia, they were required to swear that they were protestants. This, he remarked, was an exclusion of Roman Catholics inconsistent with the liberality of the present age. It was more particularly inconsistent in a war carried on for the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic religion in France, and in the prosecution of which we had been so intimately connected with Roman Catholic allies. We ought to recollect how many individuals of that description there were in Ireland, whom it was the policy of ministers to conciliate. There could be no doubt that Roman Catholics would fight as bravely and as zealously in defence of the present system as any other class of subjects. He remarked that the necessity of this oath would operate particularly hard on Roman Catholic gamekeepers, and concluded with moving the amendment, that the words should be struck out of the oath—"I do swear that I am a protestant."

The *Speaker* informed Mr. *Sheridan* that it was then too late to introduce an amendment, as all the amendments had previously

previously been gone through, but that he would have an opportunity on the third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be read a third time the next day, if then engrossed.

CAVALRY BILL.

The report of the cavalry bill was brought up.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he had consulted some gentlemen who thought it would be more convenient if in the discussion this bill was divided; he should therefore move that it might be re-committed for that purpose; he by no means however meant to relinquish that part which related to the gamekeepers.

Mr. *Sheridan* said that the right honourable gentleman had anticipated what was his intention. He meant to move that the bill should be re-committed in order to divide it into two parts; as he was convinced of the propriety of this division, he did not despair to persuade him to abandon altogether that part which related to the gamekeepers. He affirmed that the clauses were so full of errors, as to be quite unintelligible, and incapable of being corrected.

An instruction was then moved, that the committee should be empowered to divide the bill into two parts, and the House resolved itself into the committee.

The committee then went through the bill, on which a good deal of conversation took place upon the clauses between the *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, Mr. *Fox*, Mr. *Sheridan*, Mr. *Curwen*, Sir *W. Milner*, Mr. *Biddulph*, Lord *Stanley*, &c.

Upon the clause respecting the quantum of contribution to be furnished by different persons in different places,

Mr. Alderman *Coombe* said, he did not rise merely to oppose the principle of the bill, though that was certainly very exceptionable; but he rose to propose an amendment which should embrace and secure the privileges of the city of London. For that city he had the honour to be chosen a representative, and he sincerely wished to respect, and inasmuch as he could, support those privileges and rights, which he was sorry to say, had for some time past been neglected, and by others materially invaded. Not long since certain measures had no sooner been agitated by the friends of the minister in the city, than a certain party had agreed to them. When the navy volunteer measure was proposed, the late members for the city supported it with amazing constancy. Indeed, all the endeavours of ministers to assuage and disfranchise the citizens of London had, for many years past, been but too successful.

So

So much was this the case, that a peculiar measure was no sooner proposed, than, certain as the shadow followed the substance, it met the acquiescence of some too credulous citizens. But acquiescence on past occasions would not be to him a guide in his conduct on this, or on any future occasion. A dangerous influence had, he knew, been long predominant in the public councils of his fellow citizens, and this influence did not a little characterise the clause of the present bill, to which his objection should be directed. This clause essentially affected the chartered rights of the city of London, and therefore it was that he should now propose the insertion of the words "except the city of London and its liberties," to follow the words "the kingdom of Great Britain, &c."

Mr. *Alderman Lushington*, after seconding this motion, said that no man he was sure could respect, no man be more solicitous to preserve the rights and privileges of his constituents, the citizens of London than himself. The impression an early sense of the propriety of such a zeal had made, was likewise such as to inspire him always with a lively concern for those rights, whenever they might happen to form, or in any respect be involved in the discussion of any public topic. On the present occasion he certainly agreed with his honourable colleague in the exception he had so justly taken to the particular clauses in question.

The *Lord Mayor* rose to express his acquiescence in those sentiments of his honourable colleagues, which had been so warmly expressed with regard to the sacredness of those rights for which the citizens had often sacrificed much, and to which they had been constitutionally attached. But though in these sentiments he could fully agree, he at the same time saw no just reason why the citizens of the metropolis should be exempted from such contributions as might be found necessary to place the country in a respectable state of defence. That there existed great and immediate danger of invasion he did not doubt; and therefore it was that he thought the city of London and its liberties should not be more particularly excepted on the present occasion, than other cities and corporations less important throughout the kingdom. He would therefore, if the committee were agreeable, prepare and propose a clause, which he had no doubt would fully answer every purpose of the amendment, that had been just proposed by his honourable colleague.

Alderman Anderson said, that he held in his hand a clause, which he meant to propose to the committee, and which

would, he did not at all doubt, answer all the purposes of that suggested by Mr. Alderman *Coombe*.

This clause, "saving the rights of the city of London," was accordingly brought up and agreed to.

Mr. *Sheridan*, in remarking upon the oath to be administered to the persons who might form the new military corps, said that in an age and in a House enlightened as the present, he had expected that no distinction would have been made between certain religious persuasions. A distinction had, however, been preserved in the oath, for only protestants are thereby to be approved of. In other countries ministers had not scrupled to form alliances with roman catholic powers; but in our country, and on the eve, as the right honourable gentleman has told us of an invasion, an oath is proposed, the nature and tendency of which evidently are to disunite and enervate the people of the country.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* replied, that he certainly could not agree with the honourable member in all he had said. That the oath might, in some respects be an objectionable oath, he would admit; but he did not fully comprehend either the propriety or aptness of the objections which had been made to it.

Mr. *Sheridan* announced his intention to discuss, upon a future occasion, more fully, the oath alluded to.

The bill was then gone through, and the House being resumed, the report was ordered to be received the next day.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* then said, he proposed bringing forward the bill relative to gamekeepers, separate from the other which the House had that night been discussing in the committee. He intended it to be read a first and second time, and committed next day.

He therefore moved, "That leave be given to bring in a bill to enable his Majesty to require the military services of persons therein described, to be embodied in case of necessity."
—Granted.

The army and navy augmentation bill was ordered to be re-committed to a committee of the whole House the next day.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, November 2.

The House of Commons being summoned to attend, the royal assent was given by commission to the annual land and malt tax bills.

The

The augmentation militia bill was brought up from the commons, and read a first time.

Heard counsel on Opie's divorce bill, and read the bill a second time.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

The committee on the Quakers' bill was put off till Monday.

Leave was given to bring in a bill for indemnifying those who had omitted to take the test.

CORN.

The House went into a committee to continue the importation, to prohibit the exportation of corn for a limited period, and to consider farther the amended corn bill of last year.

Mr. *Ryder* said, that he had on recent occasions troubled the House so much at large with his sentiments on this bill, he had seen such grateful unanimity subsist between gentlemen, when to the operation of its principle, it was proposed to give a less limited influence than it possessed in the state it was in, when passed last year into a law, he had likewise so seriously considered the measure in its amended state, that only the subsequent suggestions of persons of whose talents he thought highly, and whose information was extensive, could have induced him again to resume the discussion. But what he had to propose, and which, with the permission of the committee, he should introduce the next day in the form of a clause, was connected with the object of the bill itself. It was true the observations he should be forced to make, were not such as could redound to the honour of certain classes of the community; but no tenderness for the feelings, even of his friends, should make him swerve from the performance of what, on the present occasion, he considered to be his duty. The fact in itself was truly a lamentable one. Not less important, indeed, than that many opulent individuals throughout England, but especially persons in and near the metropolis, were in possession of vast quantities of damaged grain. This, Mr. *Ryder* said, was a melancholy consequence of that system of monopoly which had been persevered in but too rigidly, and combated in vain. Poor and enfeebled individuals had, by such practices, been deprived of the benefit of the actual produce.

produce of the harvests of the country. However, it was then his intention to propose the adoption of a clause, which should have for its object the empowering the commissioners of the excise to authorize the distilling of spirits from the corn he had alluded to. Even this alternative was to him a most unpleasant one; it was an alternative which, while the particular case compelled him to resort to it, he heartily regretted; for it was, in plain English, the proposing to make into spirits that which was in its present state, perfectly unfit for the food of man. Nevertheless, it was better he thought so to use it, than to have the reflection that individuals who might have innocently enough kept their corn a week too long, should be sufferers by its total corruption. To prevent the practice of fraud, he had recommended that the commissioners of the excise might be invested with that certain degree of power, to which he had in the early part of his speech alluded. Such a power would doubtless enable them so to regulate the certificates they might issue, as utterly to preclude the reacting of any old evasions. He would therefore content himself now with re-stating, that he should the next day move, that it be an instruction to the committee to adopt a clause, empowering his Majesty's commissioners of excise to authorize the proprietors of damaged corn to distill the same.

The *Lord Mayor* rose to suggest to the House, that owing to the present undefined state of the bread assize in the metropolis, much inconvenience had accompanied any arrangements which he had at any time been able to make for the more equitable operation of that important branch of the police. His brethren in office had, he said, often officiated with him in endeavours to fix a standard, by which the assize might be rationally regulated. But their endeavours had hitherto proved altogether ineffectual. Many members of the House were, he was sure, well able, if not to arrange completely, at least to assist him in the arrangement of such a measure, especially the country gentlemen; they might he thought, during the recess, consult with their constituents about the means likely to produce such a regulation as should for ever establish beyond doubt, the proper assize of all sorts of bread. Mean while, he said, he should himself be watchful and do all in his power to make such an arrangement of his ideas on the subject, as he might think worthy of the attention of that House.

The House was resumed and agreed to go further into the committee the next day.

PROMUL-

PROMULGATION OF STATUTES.

Mr. *Abbot* rose, to submit to the House some observations on a subject, the discussion of which he had recently anticipated. A few days since he gave notice to the House, of his intention to move for a committee to enquire into the most effectual mode of promulgating statutes. He rose in order to make that motion, but thought it his duty also to state some of those reasons which induced him to agitate the subject. Formerly it had been the custom throughout England for the sheriffs to proclaim in their respective districts, every new law that was made. By this practice the country profited considerably. The laws were in fact no sooner capable of promulgation, than they were generally and publickly known. Whether or no such practice actually prevented the commission of crimes, it was not for him positively to say; but there thence was less danger of crimes being committed then than now. At present, indeed, the fact was, that men were tried, convicted, and sometimes lost their lives, according to the tenor of laws, the existence of which was even unknown to them. As matters now stand, the magistrates themselves do not even know the laws; yet it is certainly true, that magistrates there are, who have been frequently obliged to act under the unpromulgated statutes. This was done, too, to the great inconvenience, nay ruin of some of his majesty's subjects. The evil was therefore in this point of view, truly serious, and well worthy of consideration. Not even these evils however palpable as they might seem, were in consequence of any magisterial perversion. They were the effect, the natural effect, of a change of times. Individual neglect entered not at all into the composition of those causes which gave birth to such evils. With the laws these evils increased and multiplied. With the laws too they must yet decrease and be simplified. In the mean time, however, a remedy was wanted; nor must any delay be suffered to mingle with the proceedings of the House on the subject. It was the House alone that could agree upon the remedy, and this remedy ought to be such as would assimilate to the nature of the abuse. The dignity joined to the wisdom of parliament, would, he did not doubt, be displayed on this subject; a subject which he, for one, thought not the least important of any that could be submitted to the representatives of Great Britain. He need not say that he thought much good would eventually rise out of such arrangement

rangements and improvements as the House might think fit to adopt. These arrangements might be made without incurring scarcely any additional expence, or imposing additional burthens on the people. What remedy or mode of promulgation the committee might choose to adopt, he could not foretell, but he trusted it would be such a mode or remedy as should, in its operation and influence, be not only expeditious but effectual and extensive. Having said this, he begged leave to move "That a committee be appointed to enquire into the most effectual means of promulgating the statutes of the realm, and to report their observations thereupon."

Mr. *Wilberforce* said, it was with great pleasure that he seconded the motion of his honourable friend. The evil alluded to was one of considerable magnitude. It was daily felt, and ought therefore to be instantly remedied. This, he knew, the magistrates were ill able to do, it therefore peculiarly became that House, to institute such an enquiry as had been moved for by the learned gentleman. Magistrates had, he was aware, often been called to execute laws, of which, in the words of the honourable mover, they knew nothing, not even their existence. The truth of this, was however, no proof of either the incapacity or inattention of magistrates. It was evincive only of the growth, and accumulation of evils in this case so justly complained of. Than the magistrates of Great Britain, there did not, he was certain, preside in any country a more honest, liberal, and enlightened body of men. But it was impossible, that even having these great and good qualities, they could know the extent and provisions of a law, the utmost range of which had perhaps puzzled the courts of King's-bench, Exchequer, and Common-pleas. As his honourable friend was equally at a loss what remedy to propose; and if great and cultivated talents, if benevolence of nature, if erudite ingenuity could entitle the suggestions of one man more than those of another to peculiar attention, he was sure the honourable mover would be so distinguished. To form and arrange the means of promulgating the statutes of the realm, Mr. *Wilberforce* thought his learned friend fully competent. It was for this reason that he had felt a pride in seconding the present motion.

The motion was agreed to, and the committee appointed, to consist of Mr. *Abbot*, Mr. *Wilberforce*, the *Attorney* and *Solicitor General*, Mr. *Serjeant Adair*, &c. &c. &c.

A motion

A motion was made that the committee have leave set during recess of the House.—Granted.

It was also moved, that it be an instruction to the committee to take into their consideration as much of the report, presented the last session of last parliament, upon the obsolete statutes, as was connected with the subject of their consideration.—Agreed to.

Mr. *Rose* brought up the navy funding Bill, which was read a first time and ordered to be read a second time to-morrow.

General *Tarleton* moved for an account of the navy bills that have been issued from the 18th of April to the 1st of November 1796.—Ordered.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that as it might be found convenient for the House to adjourn for some days, perhaps it would be proper to discharge the orders of such election petitions as stood fixed for any day between the 10th and 24th of November; he should therefore move that the order for the consideration of such petitions should be discharged. Agreed to.

Accordingly the order for taking into consideration the petitions from Leominster, Melbourne Port, and Tregony, were severally discharged and renewed. Leominster, Thursday the 24th. Melbourne Port, Monday the 29th of November, and Tregony, Thursday the 1st of December.

The Militia augmentation Bill was brought up.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* moved a clause to allow a provision to be made, at the discretion of the magistrates, for the families of those who served under this Bill, for the twenty days during which they were called out to be disciplined.

Sir *William Young*, after discussing at some length the principles of the old militia law, its lenient exemptions, and conformity to the spirit of parochial freedom, proposed the insertion after "*poor man,*" of the words "*nor any poor man having more than two children.*" He said this was an amendment, the adoption of which would not, he hoped, be opposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In all countries, in all ages, even from the days of Athenian freedom, to the reign of despotism in Russia, exceptions had been made on occasions of military levies in favour of the poor man of large family. Than himself, there was not, he believed, a man who more implicitly relied on the general foundation of Mr. Pitt's opinions. He indeed relied more on his judgment than

than upon that of any man alive ; but then he would take upon him to say, that gentlemen, accustomed to fill official situations in the country, were better qualified to judge of the propriety of measures, the operation of which would be confined entirely to the parishes. It would be extremely hard were the parishioners of every parish of England to be burdened with the children of persons whose services had been required by the country; nor was this all. The enemy might even be induced to suppose, that out of eight millions of inhabitants, England *would not* send more than sixty thousand men into the field to assert their rights, and defend her privileges in the hour of danger. Nay, these sixty thousand would, by the Bill as it at present stands, be properly composed, the major part at least, of persons who had been turned out of employment, and their only child left starving. These were, Sir William said, serious, and he thought, important facts, facts which, as well as his proposed amendment, he willingly submitted to the right honourable Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* moved, instead of the words "*Two children*," the insertion of the words "*Three children*."

Mr. *Sheridan* observed, that though he had neither agreed with the honourable baronet nor with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as to the necessity of the measures, still he conceived it his duty to suggest what appeared to him to be the inefficacy of their respective amendments. The number of children to be allowed to each man, said Mr. Sheridan, is the object of the arrangement, but a word has not been said about the ages at which they must have arrived to form fit exceptions.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* proposed, that the amendment should include only such children as might be found under ten years of age.

This was agreed to, but

Sir *William Young* persevering in his amendment, divided the House, when the numbers were,

Ayes (For his amendment) 22

Noes (Against it) 93

The Chancellor of the Exchequer's amendment was accordingly adopted, which, together with one or two more alterations, were included in a rider, which was annexed to the Bill, and the Bill, in its amended state, sent to the Lords for their concurrence.

General

General *Tarleton* moved for an account, shewing how much money has been given for the service of the year 1796, to be classed under the usual official heads; as also an account of the unpaid services.

The House went into a committee of the whole House, and filled up the blanks.

CAVALRY BILL.

The report of the cavalry Bill was brought up, and the first part of it being read,

General *Tarleton* said that he was decidedly against the whole of the measure which had been brought forward upon the subject of the present Bill. When nothing more than a vague rumour of invasion had been thrown out, and when measures so extensive, and so oppressive, were to be founded upon it, the House would do well to consider what had been the conduct of our ancestors upon similar occasions, and to compare their measures with those which were now intended. He should stand under the correction of the House, if he erred in any of his historical allusions. In former times it would not be found that by any means of security public liberty had been endangered, while on the contrary it seemed to have been the character of every measure proposed, as particularly during the last parliament, to diminish and to confine the best rights of the people. In recurring to former periods, in which a danger of invasion existed, it would be unnecessary to dwell upon the situation of this country in the year 1688. Then the Prince of Orange had been invited by a great body of this nation to protect their civil and religious rights, which were both attacked by the reigning monarch. He should pass over the reign of King William and Queen Mary. In 1715 this country was threatened with invasion. But what was the state of the nation at that period? A disputed title, and numerous adherents of the exiled family throughout the kingdom, yet what was done? A message from the throne communicated to parliament the danger with which the nation was menaced, it was resolved to form a camp in Hyde Park; 13 regiments of dragoons, and eight of infantry, were voted. In 1718 when an invasion was projected, and an expedition was prepared under the conduct of the duke of Ormond, which after putting to sea was by the storm off Finisterre forced to return to the coast, and afterwards the idea laid aside, the king communicated every advice which he had received on the subject, and trusted the

defence of the island to the navy, which ever was its best security. The next plan of invading this country was in 1743. Then there was still a disputed title, there was no considerable body of troops on foot, nor did the militia at that time exist. The projected expedition was to be conducted by the most renowned generals in military history. A message was sent to parliament with information respecting the design. The enemy, trusting to their strength at sea, fitted out an expedition at Dunkirk, and had put up the channel, and were off Dungeness; but by the superiority of our naval power under Sir J. Norris (a superiority which he trusted would ever continue) the enemy's design proved abortive. In 1756, a demonstration took place on the coast of France, the design was known previously to have existed, which in some measure was the cause of that war. In 1759, a message was brought to the House, by the illustrious father of the present minister, communicating information of a design that was entertained, in consequence of which the militia was embodied; but that great man had trusted to the natural strength of Britain; her naval superiority. No plan of operation was disconcerted, no expedition suspended; and by the brilliant successes of our fleet under Hawke and Boscawen, all danger was removed. In 1779, another design had been meditated, and that which was most serious and which could best be contrasted with the present period. The French and Spanish fleets in 1779 appeared in the English channel, but soon shifted their station without effecting any thing. During the whole course of the proceedings, therefore, it appeared that the House had always been informed of the operations of the enemy by messages from his Majesty, and that no greater exertions had ever been made even at the times of the highest alarm, than to embody the militia and rely upon the strength of the navy. The comparison he made was between the present period and that of 1743. In 1743, as he before observed, there was a disputable title to the throne, the contention of internal parties was violent, one part of the dominions was ripe for rebellion, no troops were embodied, the pretender had left Italy, and an hostile armament had sailed from Dunkirk, and yet the strength and superiority of the British fleet was deemed sufficient. Let the House look to the situation of the country in 1796. At present there are 100,000 men in arms well affected to the cause of their country, and a navy equal to our naval strength at any period

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in the annals of our history. We were in a state of active preparation, we had the authority of the honourable gentleman himself (Mr. Pitt) that two of the enemy's principal armies were annihilated. Though this might be too much, it was certainly true that a great charge had lately been effected in our situation; in July, our situation from the extraordinary success of the enemy might appear critical; but now every one could see how affairs were changed. In July their southern armies were hurrying successfully through Italy, while their northern armies were in daily expectation of penetrating to Vienna. They had armies on the frontiers of Bavaria, and on the frontiers of Bohemia, which were now driven back to the borders of the Rhine. Yet how had these variations influenced the management of ministers? In July, when our ally the Emperor was threatened with the total loss of his dominions, when the armies of the enemy were successful in every operation, and when it might have reasonably been expected that they would have turned their arms against us, their only remaining powerful opponent, the ministry supinely suffered them to do it, and had no recourse whatever to extraordinary exertions. But now that the enemy had to secure their situation on the upper and lower Rhine, to recruit the losses they have sustained in their retreat, and to establish discipline; now, that according to the declaration of ministers themselves, the armies of the enemy are annihilated, this country is to have an additional force of 103,000 men to ward off the terrors of invasion. With regard to the danger of invasion, he should give his opinion of the subject. There were three points on the coast of France from which a descent might be attempted. From Dunkirk to Brest there was no advantage for collecting troops, and the coast was unfavourable. From Brest to the Western coasts the situation was advantageous for an attempt upon Ireland, or against our possessions in the West Indies, but was not calculated for an invasion upon England. From Dunkirk to the Texel there was great convenience for the collecting and embarking of troops, especially since Holland had become the ally of France; but we had seen that instead of pouring troops into this quarter, the troops in Holland, formerly under Bournonville, had been detached to reinforce their different armies, so that any apprehension of invasion, from a proper consideration of the circumstances, would be in a great measure done away. Upon the debate upon this subject upon a former occasion, it was said that a

part of his Majesty's European dominions was threatened. At first he had supposed that Corsica was meant, but when he saw in the public papers that war had been declared against us by Spain, that the king of Naples had made peace with France, and that Corsica was abandoned, he concluded that Ireland must be meant, and that the false alarm here was intended to conceal the real alarm there. It would be found better policy, however, to restore to them their rights, and by an equal distribution of the blessings of the constitution to restore to the people confidence in the government. The number of men to be raised was 100,000, besides yeomanry, cavalry and volunteers, which would raise the force to 110,000. But before this addition was made to the forces of the country, parliament ought to consider the necessity, and to calculate the expence. The whole expence of the military force of the country would amount to 15 millions. If in reality these laws were to be made to enable the minister to send troops to Ireland, why not come manfully forward and avow the measure? If they consented to the measures, the real objects of which were concealed, the dignity of the House was lost; necessity might be the pretence for depriving them of their dearest rights, and might easily be pleaded. If the Executive government was to judge of the necessity, the House was prostrated at the feet of the minister, and renounced the exercise of their most valuable privileges. The levies to be raised by this bill would be unfit to be brought into the field in case of real danger, and would excite much ill blood in the country; he had proved then that we had differed from the practice of our ancestors, and that the dignity of the House had ever been respected by a communication from the throne of the danger that was threatened. He had shewn, however, that here no danger existed; and impressed with these sentiments, he hoped that the House would not adopt a measure which involved so much expence, and was equally useless and unnecessary.

Mr. Fox.—My utter disapprobation of this Bill, upon the general grounds, as well as of the particular parts of it, have been already expressed. I thought it upon the first view, a Bill which hardly any alteration could have made useful. I think it even now, although much labour has been bestowed upon it in every part while it was in the committee, a Bill highly inexpedient, extremely difficult, if not wholly impracticable to be put into execution; tending to create great expence, without affording the hope of raising a force
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that will be available to us should the hour of need arrive. With regard to many parts of it, as they stood at first, and as they stand now, I confess they are such as I have not been able to make my understanding comprehend. But I took the speech of the minister for the purpose of illustration, and with that assistance I confess myself to be very much in the dark. I understand however, that upon payment of the sum of 15l. the material purposes of the bill may be evaded. I do not mean the word evaded to be applied as a reproach to those who may wish to screen themselves from the effect of the Bill, and therefore I should say, that for the sum of 15l. the material purposes of the Bill may be avoided. That expence, however, would amount to no less than 300,000l. which would, in that event, be a tax upon the people of this country. It is stated by the advocates for this and other measures of a similar nature, that such will not be the general effect of the Bill, but that it will create a very great force for a very useful purpose. Then I refer to the Bill itself, in which I find so much intricacy, so much difficulty, so much perplexity, as will, I think, render it entirely impracticable. What is the answer to this?---That we are in a state of so much danger that we had better pass the Bill, imperfect as it is, than expose ourselves to the inconveniences which might arise, if such a measure were not adopted. I own I do not think so; in case of an actual invasion, I have no doubt we should immediately raise a cavalry equal at least to this; greater, I trust, and much more effectual than this would ever be: and therefore I can see no utility whatever in the present Bill. Its advocates advance a singular argument in its favour. They say it is peculiarly necessary at this moment. Such is their argument upon the 2d of November. We were told on the 6th of October, in the King's speech, that an invasion was threatened. We have been told since, that such intention was so fully pointed out to us, that we recognised it so clearly as to be bound to every measure of this nature without taking notice of any expence which may attend it. Those who advised his Majesty to make that speech, and who urged this House to address his Majesty in consequence of that speech, were then aware of the necessity of this measure. Now I ask, if this House should submit to hear, and, if it does submit to hear, that such a Bill on the 2d of November is so imperfect as to be difficult even to be comprehended, when its authors knew of the danger on the 6th of October? The public will

will naturally think there has been time to prepare a much less imperfect measure; something that had less intricacy, less perplexity, and less difficulty. I say therefore, the argument which tends to maintain we had better pass this Bill, imperfect as it is, than incur the danger of an invasion without such preparation, comes singularly enough from the authors of this Bill. Then comes the argument, that this Bill, which I say is liable to so many objections, and will be, I believe, impracticable, is a measure likely to create less difficulty to this country than would arise from an actual invasion. I say that viewing the bill as I do, it would be easier to raise an effectual cavalry in time of invasion than to carry this bill into any useful effect. What sort of cavalry will this Bill provide? Are they to be trained? I believe there is no provision that will be effectual in that respect. Should the advocates of the present Bill say it is useful to us to have a large force of cavalry well trained and disciplined, I could understand the sense of such an observation. Such cavalry, I admit, would be useful in the hour of danger, but that observation is not applicable to the present Bill. The force as I understand it, will continue to be untrained and undisciplined, and consequently no better than a force raised on the moment of danger. Taking the subject in that view, I would say I would rather trust to the energy of the people in the hour of danger, than raise so inefficient a force as I conceive this will be, for should we rely on the energy of the people in the hour of danger, we might safely call upon every man, not for one horse out of ten, not for one horse out of three, but for every horse in his possession, in which case we should have all the power which can be called into action; but by this we can have no efficient force, although we entail upon the public an enormous expence; an expence, in my view of the subject, almost, if not entirely, useless. I am sensible that on this part of the argument some persons will consider that the whole question is a speculative one, depending upon the probability of the danger. It may be so; but can be so only to a certain degree, and then comes to be a decided question, how much inconvenience the public should be made to suffer, in order to prepare against the supposed probability of danger? The proportion between the inconvenience and the danger appears to me such as cannot warrant any thing like the inconveniencies with which this measure must be attended. Should the hour of real danger arrive, you will have without law much more effectual force

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to defend you than you can ever hope to have by the enactment of any law, for in case of actual necessity you may rely on the courage, the zeal, and the ardour of the whole mass of the people of this country. But by the present measure you will not have any force that will in any considerable degree be available to the public. I am aware of the common place and flimsy answer which may be made to this. "True, this force will not be so great as that which would arise from the zeal and ardour of the people, should an actual invasion take place, but this measure may tend to prevent that invasion." Gentlemen disposed to listen to such an observation would do well to consider the situation of this country and of France, as ably stated to-night by my honourable friend. But should they not be satisfied with his observations upon the subject, let them consider the statement of ministers themselves in that particular. Can any man think that an invasion of this country may be either forwarded or retarded by the passing or rejecting of this Bill? I am sure that an invasion, if made, must be made (as already stated by the minister himself) either for diversion in one place, to conceal intentions of attacking seriously in another, or seriously for the purpose of throwing this country into confusion. Neither of which purposes can be either forwarded or delayed by such a Bill as this. I cannot, therefore, see its utility as a measure intended to prevent invasion. I see, therefore before me; a choice of two things, either to adopt that which will produce great inconvenience by introducing confusion and perplexity to be attended by great expence, without providing security for the danger, or relying on that which, I have no doubt, will repel the danger without previous inconvenience or expence. I therefore cannot hesitate to declare, that rather than adopt a Bill which to its declared object is inadequate, I would rely on the courage and magnanimity of the people when the danger shall arrive; for in the event of such a danger, you will have as much force to defend you as if this Bill had never passed, and I think that when it passes, the real security of the country will not be in the smallest degree encreased. It therefore appears to me to tend to nothing but useless inconvenience and embarrassment. I know that it has been said to the people of this country; "We only call upon you, now, to do a part of that which we know you would perform without it, should the danger call upon you." True but you call upon them for a great expence, you put them to great in-

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convenience, and after all, I say your measure is inadequate to the object which you profess. If the Bill was merely intended to operate as an enquiry into the number of horses kept in this country, that might lead to useful information, if government stood in need of it; but that they know already. If it was to enquire into the quality of these horses, that might also be useful information, but if government wishes really to possess it, let them call on parliament to pass a Bill for that purpose, without passing a Bill which puts the people to great difficulties, and which will not add to their security in time of need. These observations I admit, do not apply to the probability of an invasion. I shall now proceed to state to the House my opinion generally upon that subject. I have at different periods of my life formed different opinions from different circumstances; as to the danger of an invasion of this country. In 1779 there were few persons more apprehensive than myself of the probability of that event. In the year 1796, few indeed less apprehensive of that danger. If the moment should arrive, which God avert! if France should become superior to this country so as to be able to command the channel, then indeed, a man of the strongest mind and nerves may be apprehensive of an invasion. If the French should obtain footing in this island, and have from thence a communication with the continent, then indeed, we should be in danger; even then, I trust, they could not dismay us. But while we are superior at sea, I will not say an invasion is wholly impracticable; although I confess I see but little danger of it, should the enemy chuse to risk it. They may, by taking advantage of the direction in which the wind may blow, land considerable forces in this island; but I consider them as not likely to make such a rash attempt, for they must consider the whole of an army dispatched upon such an expedition, as a force to be entirely sacrificed. Under such circumstances certainly they would never return; therefore, I think, that under such circumstances they will never be sent. It must be obvious to the House that I do not here allude to the landing of a few men upon some part of your coast to commit some small depredations; that perhaps might happen at almost at any time, but I am speaking of invasion in the generally received idea of that calamity. I know we are not upon all occasions to trust to the prudence our enemies, for they may undertake that which is manifestly imprudent. True it is they have sent great armies upon desperate

desperate expeditions. We have known great forces sacrificed to great enterprizes. We have had abundant instances of their boldness, but I do not think that from all the experience we have had of their conduct in this war, we are justified in apprehending they will undertake a measure so obviously against their interest as an invasion of this country at the present time. I say, therefore, that an invasion of this country by the French is not a probable event. I am not one of those who wish the French to land in this country merely for the purpose of their meeting, what I am sure they would, total destruction. I do not wish the valour of the people of England to be shewn upon such an occasion. An invasion, whatever its event, must always be regarded as a serious evil, but great as such an evil would be to Great Britain at this moment, were I compelled to take my choice between that evil, and a continuance of the present war for two years, I would, as the friend of the real interests of this country, prefer an invasion as the lesser calamity of the two. I say this of a real invasion, but if there is no probability of that event, look at the situation into which this country may be brought, by acting as if every threat of invasion was to be followed up by its reality. You will expend millions after millions in preparing against threats which were never intended to be executed; and should your enemy discover this to be your disposition, it may complete your ruin without any loss or danger to itself; for surely nothing can be easier nor less expensive than to threaten you with invasion. In judging therefore of this event, as in judging of all events, you must compare all the circumstances, and form your opinion of the probability. The expences of this country are already extremely great, by the documents upon your table your military forces appears little short of 100,000 men at this hour; I therefore would advise your making a judicious disposal of the force which you possess already; that would be much more likely to be beneficial than any thing which this bill can produce. I am laying it down as a thing not disputed, and without it this country cannot long exist, that an invasion would immediately call forth all the energy, all the zeal, and all the real power of this nation, and therefore it is that I do not fear the danger of invasion. I may be told that "true it is an invasion would have that effect, but of what avail would be all our energy and all our zeal, if a great number had not arms in their hands." I do not mean to contend that zeal alone can defend a nation; but the zeal of men, even without arms, is

a very formidable thing ; those who have invaded countries can give us pretty clear evidence. Should this be doubted I would refer to those who invaded France in an early period of the present war. I would refer again to those who took part against America. I would then ask whether there is not much correctness in the doctrine which attributes great strength to zeal. Should my ideas upon this subject be erroneous, that will not furnish an argument in favour of the present bill, for I do not understand that the numbers to be collected under it, are to be trained or disciplined, or to possess any military advantage as a military force, therefore there is nothing to make it more useful than its zeal would be, when occasion required its exertion. I confess, therefore, that as I see no probability of invasion, I see no utility whatever in the present measure.

It has however been said, it is not for Great Britain only we ought to be anxious. Those who have attended to me in the course of what I have had occasion to urge on those topics, will remember that I always confined myself to Great Britain solely with very studious care, because I wanted to know whether any part of this force was intended to enable ministers to carry on operations in other parts of his Majesty's dominions. I understood, but not till very lately, that ministers have some apprehensions with regard to Ireland. If so, if they believe the enemy have serious intentions to invade that part of his Majesty's possessions, I own I should be as ready as any man in this House, or in this country, to assent to any measure tending to prevent such a calamity. We are not to determine which of the two islands they mean to attack. One of them is as serious an object to be defended as the other, and therefore, I for one, have brought my mind to assent to any thing which may be beneficial in that respect. I cannot, however, help wishing we had a little more authentic information of the danger than we actually have. But I will own that from the words I heard uttered by the minister the night before last, I believe from the whole tenor of his speech that night upon that subject, and by the manner he adopted (for the manner of a speaker upon important occasions constitutes part of his speech), I am more convinced, than once I was, he had some apprehensions of the probability of an invasion ; it was upon that principle I acceded to the bill which passed this House this night. When he expressed some apprehension of danger to Great Britain, I thought very lightly of it, but when under the title of his Majesty's other *European* possessions, he alluded to Ireland, I had

had no difficulty in believing the reality of his alarm. That ministers should be alarmed at the state of Ireland cannot be wonderful, but here I cannot help saying to his Majesty's ministers, "If you are seriously alarmed at the state of Ireland, if you are desirous of preventing distraction there, if you are seriously disposed to restore to it confidence and harmony, give to your ministers there instructions similar to those under which Lord Fitzwilliam lent his assistance to your councils. Renounce the principles and practices that occasioned his recall. Remove those odious marks of distinction, which disgrace the policy of your government in that country. Allow the catholics to possess their just rights. Let it not be a matter in which the policy of your government should interfere, in what way a man shall proceed to church, or exercise his devotion. If you are indeed, seriously disposed to wish Irishmen to be contented, give them a constitution. Do not insult them with a contemptible monopoly, under the name of a parliament. Do not provoke their indignation, with an image which is but the mockery of the parliament of Great Britain. If you are indeed in earnest, in wishing to appease the anger of the inhabitants of Ireland, the remedy is, I think before you, for I hope it is not yet too late. It is not the question here how you conducted yourselves with regard to lord Fitzwilliam, but should you ask me, whether I had rather the principles on which he consented to aid your councils, were restored to Ireland, and whether I should think them more effectual to restore tranquillity there than 20,000 men from Great Britain, I should have no difficulty in giving you an answer. Can I have a doubt upon such a subject? Can I have a doubt that if Irishmen were treated as they ought to be, that an invasion in Ireland would be attended with the same destruction to the invaders, as it would in England?" I could wish that those who recalled lord Fitzwilliam attended to these observations. I could wish that those who seem desirous to put the laborious classes of men in that country, in a scale as it were with cattle, reflected on the danger into which they are involving that island. I could wish that the mass of the people of Ireland should be treated like men, not like oxen and sheep. When I reflect, however, that ministers have not retracted their nefarious principles, when I perceive they have not begun to re-tread their steps, I own I am inclined to draw this inference; that whatever I may know of that country, they know also, and know a great deal more, and they have taken no measures to change

the condition of the mass of the people of Ireland. They have no serious apprehensions of an invasion of that country; else, how was it possible to account, not only for their obstinate perseverance in their political sentiments, but also for their leaving the country in its present defenceless state. They know and ought to feel the danger. I have proposed to them the only remedy which, in my conscience, I believe not only strikes at the root, but is adequate to remove the danger. By the conduct I have advised them to pursue, I believe they would unite the people of that country. But I may be told by some that this is but idle railing; that there is no reason to complain of the form of government in Ireland. That in Ireland they have their House of Lords—by the way, there are some who think the House of Lords even of Great Britain has been too much enlarged. If any man has a mind to defend the House of Lords of Great Britain, and to insist upon its purity, I would advise him to compare it with the House of Lords of Ireland, for then I am sure he will have a complete defence. There are many, and I confess I am of the number, who think that we are not in this House so truly, so justly, so adequately, the representatives of the people of Great Britain as we ought, and as some of us profess to be; but if a man is disposed to defend us, to maintain we are the commons of Great Britain in their purity, I cannot recommend to him a better plan to conduct his defence, than to refer to the House of Commons of Ireland, for certainly he may then appeal to all who know us both, and ask whether, if satisfaction can be derived from comparison, we are not almost perfect? I know that in mere form, Great Britain and Ireland have the same government upon paper; but it is not upon paper that men are to look for security to their freedom, that depends upon a serious and practical reality. I may perhaps hereafter enter more in detail into the subject of the constitution of Ireland; I only wish now to make a few allusions to it, and I could not do it more aptly I think, than by comparing it with that of the constitution of Great Britain. I remember a story which, with permission, I will relate shortly. A gentleman was enamoured of a lady whom he thought extremely beautiful, but with whose beauty others were not so enraptured; some of them ventured to insinuate they saw defects in her. He wondered at the deficiency of their taste, for he could perceive in her nothing but the most perfect beauty. But when he saw her sister, who was something like her, although not so handsome, he immediately exclaimed,

exclaimed, now that I have seen her caricature, I am enabled to form some idea of her own defects. In like manner I desire lovers (although to lovers advice is seldom very useful) to consider the constitution of Great Britain and of Ireland like these two ladies. Those who do not see defects in Great Britain, let them look at her sister, and then will they see what the carpers at the beauty have often endeavoured to expose. I know it is now, and has ever since the year 1782, been considered as an imprudent thing in a member of parliament of Great Britain to say any thing of the constitution of Ireland. I never subscribed to that doctrine. It seemed to me to be indiscreet to subscribe to it at any time, but to subscribe to it at the moment when we are voting such large armaments, for the purposes, if ministers themselves can be credited, of defending Ireland against an invasion, would be the extreme of folly and wickedness. I should, as a member of the parliament of Great Britain, discussing the interests of the British dominions, in which I include all the affairs of which our government has the care, consider myself as neglecting the duty cast upon me, and deserting my trust, if I did not advert to every thing on which the welfare of this state depends; if I did not take notice of those parts of the king's dominions which are strong, and those which are weak, and therefore it is that I have referred both to Great Britain and Ireland. I have observed in the last speech of the lord lieutenant of the sister kingdom, there is not expressed the same apprehension of an invasion as was communicated from the throne to the parliament of Great Britain. Here it becomes necessary for me to take notice of the communication from the throne to us. (Mr. Fox desired the paragraph in the king's speech which related to an invasion to be read.) "It cannot be doubted what would be the issue of such an enterprise, &c."

Why not doubt it? Partly from the strength of our navy. But also because that notwithstanding we have heard of plots, treasons, conspiracies and Jacobins, the opinion of his Majesty (his own real, his sanguine opinion, and a well-founded one I believe it to be, however the rest of his speech may be the work of his minister) is, and it is mine also, that if there be any who are real enemies to our constitution, they are too contemptible in number and in power to be noticed. Why are we not quite so well satisfied with regard to Ireland? because we know the Irish have not the same constitution in substance as we have. If they had, what could lead us to think

think more meanly of our brethren than of ourselves? Are they not equal to us in zeal? Are they not equal to us in courage? Are they not as able, as well as willing to repel invasion? Have they not given instances of all those noble qualities which we prize so highly in ourselves? If, therefore, there can be any distrust of their attachment to government now, it must be owing to the practical difference between their constitution and ours. If there be that difference, I have shewn the cause of it, and I have hinted at the remedy. I trust that remedy will be applied ere it be too late, and I believe it is not yet too late. All I can say is, that I shall have the consolation of having done my duty. If ministers neglect theirs, the public will judge who are the authors of the evil, if unhappily for us all, it should overwhelm us. I have thought it necessary to make these observations on the state of Ireland, because I could not conceive that the minister was not serious when he stated there was danger of invasion, not only of this island, but also of another part of his Majesty's European possessions not less important to us. That was a sentence I applauded, because I understood it to refer to Ireland, as indeed it could have no other reference, since Corsica is no longer subject to the British crown.

Mr. Ryder said, that he little expected to have heard that evening, when the country was in such a crisis, the collection of inflammatory matter which the right honourable gentleman who spoke last had contrived to introduce in the course of his speech. He little expected that he would have held out such a number of encouraging motives to the enemy, when they might be meditating an invasion upon the sister kingdom. He little expected to have heard from him that the subjects of that kingdom were of no more consideration in the eyes of government than the oxen and sheep which they possessed, and that such radical reforms were necessary, just after those most important and most loudly called for had been granted. In short he little expected to hear from a member of the British House of Commons, such a speech as might have composed a manifesto for a French general after invading the country of Ireland. As this was matter which in his opinion it was extremely improper to introduce, he considered it as unworthy of any reply. From the speech of that right hon. gentleman on this evening, compared with his speeches on former evenings, however, he deduced one inference, that they often made use of arguments, founded upon extreme cases, for the sake of making a temporary impression, which they afterwards

afterwards thought fit to abandon. When the alarm of an invasion was first communicated to parliament, information was demanded respecting the grounds of alarm; it was afterwards confessed that it was impossible to expect any detailed information upon the subject, and now when measures were proposed to avert the threatened calamity, these measures were arraigned as having a tendency to destroy the liberties of the people, and to subvert the constitution of the country. These sort of arguments to which he and those who sat with him in the former parliament were by no means unaccustomed, he had been in the use of considering as mere figures of speech, and he certainly on the present occasion, should not attempt to answer them. An honourable gentleman (General Tarleton) who opened the debate, had recourse to historical facts, and he had no objection to meet him upon this ground. In 1745, when there was a rumour of some French troops having landed in Scotland, the king in a message to his parliament, informed them that he had ordered 6000 Hessians to be imported into the kingdom, and parliament, in the address which they voted upon the message, thanked his Majesty for his paternal care of his people, and the step which he had taken to ensure the stability of his government. In 1756, his Majesty in his speech from the throne, merely upon some advices which he had received from persons upon whom he could rely, that preparations were making for an invasion, notified that he had made a requisition of Hessian troops, and then though parties ran as high as perhaps at any time in the history of the country, no question was asked respecting the authority of the information. Nay more, a right hon. gentleman (afterwards Lord Holland) whose memory had every claim upon the respect of the honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox,) and who was then secretary of state, in six days after the speech was delivered from the throne, brought down a message from his Majesty signifying his intention of introducing twelve Hanoverian battalions into the kingdom, a step which was then approved of by parliament, though it was a step much more inconsistent with the principles of the constitution than the measures which were now proposed to be adopted upon much better grounds. He could not perceive how the present armament could operate to the subversion of the constitution: on the contrary, if there was a plot formed against the liberties of the country, as was alleged, arming the people seemed the most likely mode of counteracting it. They were only to be called out for a few days, a period in which they could not be supposed to
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contract the habits of soldiers, or to be inured to military discipline. The expence, he stated, to be very inconsiderable, when compared with the probable advantage which would result from the measure. The honourable gentleman, when he stated it as likely to amount to three or four millions, might as well have calculated it at 40 or 50. With respect to the exertion of which these men would be capable in a moment of danger, they certainly would not be so effectual as the country rising in a mass; but still the convenience of having such a body of men in readiness would be very considerable. The infantry would be trained, the men would be provided with arms, and the horses would be inspected and pronounced fit for service, circumstances of preparation which could be best estimated by the experience of the disadvantages which would arise from neglecting to take these prudent and necessary steps.

Mr. *Wilberforce* declared he felt it unnecessary to say much after what had been advanced by his honourable friend, but lest it should appear like indifference, he would not give a silent vote upon the question. He professed never to have felt more pain and concern than in hearing the speech of the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox). He had often witnessed most bitter contentions in that House, but he had flattered himself that it would now be the boast and glory of the country, at a time when it was reduced to a situation of danger, that all party altercation had ceased, and that every member of the House had but one heart and one mind respecting the measures proper to be adopted for opposing the common foe. At this season of danger, a danger of which the honourable gentlemen themselves were sensible, their object seemed to be to weaken the hand of government, to paralyse the arm, and to cripple the exertions of the executive power. On the present night in particular he much deplored the exercise which the right honourable gentleman had made of his talents in delivering a speech, which, if there was any danger before, rendered it still more imminent and pressing; if its contents went abroad, there was no calculating the bad effects which it might produce. He did not impute to the honourable gentleman nor his friends any wish for an invasion, neither would he compliment them upon their principles; on the contrary, he believed that they would not be displeased at any small mischief befalling the country, if they could take advantage of it to get ministers turned out of office. To what did their arguments go? Had they not stated their continuance in power as the greatest possible

possible calamity to which the country could be subjected? Had they not stated the constitution to be ruined by their measures? ruined almost as often as there had been Bills passed for defending it? When men were in the practice of indulging such arguments, there was no saying where they would end. He would speak out and give his opinion fairly. That the measures now proposed would be attended with considerable expence he believed. But he believed also that that was inconsiderable when compared with the probable advantages with which their execution would be attended, and that the nation would be willing to come forward in a body, and cheerfully subscribe to them as the means of securing every thing that is valuable and dear to them. He loved the constitution, but he confessed that he should love it less if it wanted that energy in times of difficulty and danger that it now possessed. When the honourable gentleman therefore attacked the executive government at such a period, he tended to weaken its energy, and, by diminishing its strength to alienate the affections of the people from the source of their protection, and the spring of their exertions. He sat down with saying that he felt himself invincibly called upon to make these few remarks, and begged pardon of the House for having trespassed upon their attention so long.

Mr. *Sheridan*, with great warmth, said, sir, the honourable gentleman has concluded the most extraordinary and most unprovoked libel I ever heard in this House, by protesting that he had felt himself invincibly called upon to utter every word that he had said. Whence or to what nature, whether political or fanatical are the calls which so invincibly govern that honourable gentleman's conduct I neither regard nor enquire; but this I am sure of, that no part of his speech, no part of his fury, no part of his pathos, no part of his invective was called for by any one passage or sentiment in the speech of my right honourable friend. He says he has heard my honourable friend's speech with surprise and regret. Sir, I have heard his with regret but no surprise. I must regret at this crisis, when we hear so much of the necessity of temper, moderation, and a spirit of unanimity, to find that there are men on whom all those qualities, when acted upon by their opponents are lost and thrown away. I must regret to find that there are such men and such tempers: that with them forbearance breeds irritation, candour is repaid by cant, and moderation encourages insult. I appeal to the House whether or not the honourable gentleman's

speech justifies this observation. I appeal to them whether any part of my honourable friend's speech can justify the manner in which it has been attacked. Mark the malice and the bitterness of the honourable gentleman's insinuations. He is graciously pleased to admit that he does not believe that we wish this country to be actually conquered by France. As one of the party to whom he had addressed himself, I bow with all possible gratitude for this instance of his candour; but, says he, their avowed hatred of the present administration is such, that I believe they would not be displeased with that sort of invasion that might throw a degree of disgrace on the present ministers. Good God, sir, what motives does he assign us, and what object does he allot us? In contradiction to all our professions, in contradiction to all the manifestations of our actions, he boldly presumes that we are a set of selfish temporizing traitors, who without meaning to destroy, would wish the safety of the country for the gratification of disgracing the present ministers! of bringing, he says, a degree of disgrace upon them! Upon whom? Upon ministers? Begrimed and black with infamy and disgrace already! We, it seems, wish an attack on our country for the purpose of bringing a degree of disgrace on those men, as if it were possible to aggravate the shame and indignity of the situation which they have brought on themselves. On the question of the defence of the country, we have abstained from reproaching them, and they repay us with insult. I for one, expect no credit or applause from the partisans of these ministers, for the line we have pursued since the first serious announcing of the danger of an invasion; but, desirous as we have shewn ourselves, however distrustful of the minister to strengthen the executive government in case of emergency, let them not mistake our present forbearance, let them not misconstrue it as the slightest indication of a departure from a solemn resolution, to look to a day of national justice on the hope of national salvation. Our intermediate moderation they may treat as they please: but it is trying our patience high to hear those ministers, or their advocates arraigning us as factious traitors, if we dare to utter a sentiment that may bring a degree of disgrace on their characters. It is too much, sir, that we should be insultingly accused of a crafty plot to disgrace men, whose want of vigour in every enterprize, and whose want of faith in every engagement, have made their administration at this moment the hope of their enemies, and the fear of their allies. It is too much that such men should arrogantly hold their heads
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up in this House, where I view them only as arraigned culprits, whose trial is put off. That they should presume that we are as insensible to the injuries they have inflicted, as their own hardened hearts are insensible of remorse; that they shall come here with frontless inhumanity, confessing and boasting even that, now at last, they have expended blood and treasure sufficient to soothe their pride, and palliate the concession of adopting the advice of my right hon. friend, which, if originally adopted, would have saved every one of those lives, and every guinea of that treasure. It is too much to see such men covered equally with crime and shame, besmeared at once with blood and mire, erect their crests, and boldly demand support from the country, because they have endangered it, and attempt to proscribe as factious traitors, those who have fruitlessly endeavoured to save it. But, Sir, the honourable gentleman has accounted for the animated, I will not call it the rancorous manner in which he has spoken, by asserting that my honourable friend's speech displayed at a time when moderation is so desirable, the greatest degree of party animosity. On this charge I confidently appeal to all who sit near the honourable gentleman. A speech of more temperate counsel, both in matter and manner, was never heard in this House. Where was the party animosity? Yet let me retract: I guess the animosity which the honourable gentleman attributes to such counsel. My honourable friend's advice was, to change the whole system of the Irish government; to govern there as he would govern here, on the principles of equal justice, truth and plain-dealing. This is the counsel given by my honourable friend: this is the aggression of his speech. The hon. gentleman is right to resent it as a friend to the present minister. He is right in considering any advice that tends to take him from the profitable path in which he has trod as the insidious counsel of party animosity. In corruption he has walked, in corruption he has thriven. However calamitous his course to his country and the people, nothing can have been more profitable to himself and connections. The advice, therefore, that would tempt such a minister to wish a trial in the straight paths of truth and honour, may, for ought I know, be plausibly imputed to party animosity. This is the only ground on which I can account for what should otherwise appear a spurt of malice without a meaning. Mr. Sheridan, after some further observation on Mr. Wilberforce's speech, proceeded to the argument of Mr. Ryder. He agreed in every observation and sentiment uttered by Mr. Fox on the

subject. He keenly ridiculed Mr. Ryder's accusation of Mr. Fox for using inflammatory arguments with respect to Ireland, while he at the same time pleaded the danger of answering them. The best way of preventing a French General from putting inflammatory topics in his manifesto, would be to remove all cause of discontent. It could not be denied that those inflammatory topics, as they were called, were true; It would have been better to have shewn Mr. Fox's assertions to be false than to have traduced him for making them. Mr. Sheridan warned the minister of the dangerous conclusion he seemed inclined to countenance, that there was no discontent where was no clamour. "There were those who felt and were silent, and those who felt so were most to be feared." Mr. Sheridan concluded with a short review of the Bill, and though he was thankful for amendments, which he understood were to be adopted from some suggestions of his, yet he still considered it, "if meant as a measure of force, weak and inefficient; if as a measure of revenue, partial and oppressive."

Lord Stanley* declared, he could not suffer himself to give a silent vote on this subject. He considered the question, as connected with the present measure, to be, whether the ministers were to be kept in their posts, or whether more troops were intended to be raised with a view of sending them out of the country to prosecute an offensive war? The tendency of the conduct of ministers, his Lordship said, was to terrify the people of this country with imaginary plots and dangers, in order to increase the influence of administration, and of the crown. There were other dangers to the constitution than those arising from the introduction of foreign troops: and the present measure, of calling out so large a proportion of the inhabitants of this country, was, in his opinion, of this dangerous tendency.

Mr. Nicholls agreed that the Bill affected but a comparatively small part of the community. The laws of this country put every man in it, in a state of requisition; the King had a right to the personal service of every man; yet he conceived there would be more trouble in carrying the Bill into execution than ministers were aware of. He thought another plan might be brought forward, in case any additional exertion of the national strength was necessary, which would be less burthensome to the people and also afford a more efficient strength to the country. By the present Bill, a great

* Son to the Earl of Derby.

many new offences would be created, as well as much additional trouble in enforcing it. His principal motive for rising to trouble the committee, he said, was to complain of the personal observation of an honourable member who had asserted, that those who opposed the minister were the least likely to defend the country. He was as much attached to the country as any man, and would be as ready to step forward at the appearance of danger, though he was not so lavish as to approve of the measures of ministers, who, in his opinion, brought ruin, distress, and disgrace on the country.

Mr. *Sturt* declared, that he had considered what had fallen from the honourable gentleman (Mr. Wilberforce) as an insult to the side of the House on which he sat, when they had been told that they were less anxious to repel an invasion than to change the administration. It was unworthy of any liberal man to accuse gentlemen who opposed the measures of administration with being disloyal and disaffected. With regard to the enemy, he thought from the situation of their harbours, and the number (25) of their men of war in Brest water, as well as transport vessels, &c. that their force was considerable enough to attempt an invasion of this country or Ireland. The eastern coast he considered as in most danger if the enemy made three different attacks (which Mr. *Sturt* said had no doubt but they would do). For his own part, he believed there was only one safe way of avoiding an invasion, and that was by placing the working poor, who were now starving, in a better condition.

General *Tarleton* explained, as did Mr. *Sturt*.

Mr. *Jeffery* said, that as sufficient assurances had been given by ministers that an invasion was threatened, he hoped every gentleman would join heart with hand to prevent the designs of the enemy, and, in order to this, give their concurrence to the measure now proposed for strengthening the internal force of the country.

Sir *W. Pulteney* saw nothing oppressive in the present Bill, yet thought it capable of some amendment. He thought some training and small degree of military discipline might be introduced among the troops to be newly raised, and, in order to this, could wish that the non-commissioned officers of the regular cavalry might be employed in the service of training them to the use of arms, &c. He thought it highly proper to raise an additional internal force, as our navy, however, respectable, might be prevented, by contrary winds, from guarding every part of the coast. The Dutch, as well

as the French, he considered as capable of making considerable detachments of troops; and therefore, as there was no absolute security against an invasion of the enemy, he wished the passing of this Bill, which was calculated to avert the threatened mischief.

Mr. *A. Stewart* regretted that any part of the evening's debate should tend to irritate the minds of the inhabitants of this country. He could wish the allusion to the state of things in Ireland to be forgotten. The passing of this Bill could not unite the inhabitants of that kingdom, if they were disunited; at the same time, it might be one reason for this country's raising a great efficient power, to be able to afford the readier assistance to the sister kingdom in case of an attack upon it. As his majesty's ministers had declared that the enemy actually entertained a design of attempting to land somewhere, he thought no one could hesitate a moment on the propriety of raising a force sufficient to repel them. He, for one, was induced to give confidence to administration; he did not mean a blind and servile confidence, but one consisting in a liberal interpretation of their motives, a reverence for their great talents and abilities, and a persuasion that those abilities will be directed to the country's good. The efforts of ministers to this point ought to be encouraged, by a well-timed confidence, rather than enfeebled by an unqualified opposition.

Sir *Richard Glyn* said, he considered the Bill now under consideration of the House as wise and practicable, practicable because he knew the zeal and attachment of the people in support of the country; and wise because it was become a necessary measure, for he could not forget that he had lately heard from the throne, that the enemy manifest intentions of invading the country; he said the ministers of the crown were responsible to the nation and to the House, they had strongly recommended an augmentation of the internal force of the country and had submitted the Bill with other Bills which appeared to him to be efficient to that end. He humbly conceived that the House, the guardians as they are of the kingdom, the representatives of the people and protectors of their property cannot do otherwise than concur in measures which have for object the protection of every thing which is dear to the people, their properties, the national establishments, and the very existence of the country as a free and independent nation. He said he should take leave to suppose that the House was to listen to the advice of the honourable gentlemen opposite to him and re-
ject

ject the bills under consideration, and that an invasion was to follow. What then would the people of the country say, would they not have reason to exclaim, that the executive power had done its duty to the nation by informing parliament, that the enemy manifest intentions to invade us; would they not say that the ministers of the crown had done their duty in recommending measures for the defence of the country, but what would the people think and say of that House their representatives, that they had not done their duty in rejecting measures and precautions which would have precluded all intention in the enemy to invade us, and would have averted those evils and those calamities which must fall on a rich, commercial, and manufacturing people in case they should be so supine and so lost to their own interests as not to take the best measures to repel the designs of the enemy.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that he had considered an observation made by an honourable member on the preceding night concerning the hardships those persons might fall under, who had kept but one horse and who being reduced in their circumstances, should no longer keep it, if they were liable to the present bill; it was his intention therefore, to make a provision for circumstances of that kind.

The House then divided on the question,

<i>Ayes</i> (for receiving the report)	104
<i>Noes</i> (against it)	30
<i>Majority</i>	110

Several amendments were then proposed by the *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, one of which was, that all officers serving in the army and militia, who should keep a house, should, while in actual service, be exempt from the operation of the Bill. A conversation then took place on the probability of horses unfit for service being furnished; on which, The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that it would appear by the Bill, there was a penalty for sending any horse that was unfit. The report and amendments being agreed to the Bill was ordered to be read a third time to-morrow.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* brought in a Bill for enabling his Majesty to require the personal service of 15,000 men of the description therein mentioned, which was read a first time.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, he took it for granted that the Bill just brought in was called the gamekeepers Bill. He trusted

ed the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not press the second reading of it that night. He said he objected wholly to the principle of the Bill, as being one totally unknown to the constitution of the country, and of the most dangerous tendency. He particularly wished country gentlemen to have an opportunity of looking into it, for his part he should in the strongest manner oppose it, and should take the sense of the House upon it.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, it would be no ways inconvenient to him to defer the second reading till the next day. It was a very short Bill, and would not take up any length of time. He wished gentlemen to consider it with attention. If they took the trouble of reading it, they would be soon satisfied it did not merit their disapprobation or censure.

The Bill was ordered to be printed, and read a second time the next day.

The order of the day for the committee on the Bill for augmenting the army and navy was postponed 'till the next day; and the other order of the day for a committee of ways and means till Friday.

The House adjourned at a quarter before ten o'clock.

The following is a more correct and copious report of the speech of Mr. *Curwen*, on the Militia Bill, on the 31st ult, than we were able to furnish in page 166.

Sir,

SENSIBLE of the importance and advantage of unanimity at this momentous crisis, nothing but the strongest sense of duty should compel me to hazard a step which might interrupt it. If ministers are equally sincere in their wishes to preserve the general concurrence of opinion which has hitherto prevailed, it is incumbent upon them to give such information as may justify this House and reconcile the nation to the burthen and inconvenience which must result from the measures now under consideration; Sir, in my humble opinion it would have been wise and politic in ministers to have commenced their proceedings by fully and fairly laying before the House the information on which his Majesty's gracious communication of the threatened invasion is founded. Every war for the last century has had its bugbear of invasion. The present has been abundantly prolific in idle threats and gasconade, but I have yet to learn that

one

one step towards the execution of them has ever been taken. In what does this manifestation to invade this country differ from former ones, that have been announced to us. Is it a renewal of idle threats or in actual preparations. If the latter they are easily explained; to estimate the danger by what is required to guard us against it. I could scarcely rate it too highly, and yet if such really were the case, is it either probable or even possible that ministers would risque the safety of the nation on a *cold declaration* of opinion, which has raised neither alarm nor energy in the country. Thus the right honourable gentleman's system has not been so freed of ception as to preclude distrust in the breasts of those who have neither confidence or opinion of him. If the honourable gentleman wishes for the concurrence of this side of the House, tis not on the score of confidence, but on a fair and candid explanation of his measures he can have it. If the danger is real there can be but one sentiment, to be freed from such a calamity, (for such invasion would he end it, however much to our wishes) no sacrifices are too great; what so likely to rouse the people as fully to instruct them of the extent and magnitude of the danger, whence then this backwardness on the part of the minister to a step by which every thing is to be gained and nothing lost. Is there any thing so likely to deter our enemy from so rash an enterprise as knowing the ardour and energy with which the country is prepared to meet it? Sir, in opposing your leaving the chair, I wish to take issue with the right honourable gentleman on the reality of the danger. If that should be established, I should feel it my duty to go to any length which might be required. I am sensible, Sir, by opposing what comes under so specious a form as the present measures do, I expose myself to much calumny and misrepresentation. That shall not however, deter me from doing my duty; enemy as I am to the system of confidence, I am aware many occasions may occur to justify this House, granting it upon the responsibility of ministers. But what is there upon the present occasion, which intitles ministers to ask, or should induce this House to grant it. The providing for our internal security in which every man has so deep a stake, would in my humble opinion be most effectually removed, by the most public avowal of the grounds on which ministers act. Am I to consider the danger as so eminent that it would be hazardous to intrust the country with the full extent of it; must we learn it by degrees to prevent the effects of sudden panic and dispondency, little do they know the character of

Englishmen, who would argue thus, let the danger be as great as it may, the spirit and exertions of the country will rise superior to it. If this does not produce full explanation from ministers, I shall feel warranted in supposing that invasion is only a pretence to arm them with a power for purposes the policy of which might be much questioned both in and out of this House. Sir, I hope we shall govern ourselves by good old maxims and use that prudent caution, and distrust that were the characteristics of former parliaments, and spurn that blind system of unmeasured confidence which has plunged us into our present calamitous situation, a confidence so exercised by the last parliament, as to go far to establish in and out of this House the support of the minister and his measures as the criterion of attachment to the constitution itself. In the midst of our misfortunes we have reason to rejoice, that the season of fatal infatuation is nearly at an end. The beneficial consequences are already felt. The right honourable gentleman sensible he could no longer proceed with his system, has disgorged every principle upon which the war has been continued, and there is now no ostensible ground for withholding from us the blessings of peace. Should our hopes be frustrated, I trust to our enemies alone will be imputable the miseries which must ensue. Under such circumstances it will be the duty of every man to the best of his abilities to concur in securing the state, which I look for in the spirit of the country alone, not in the ability or measures of the right honourable gentleman; Sir, in a measure that is to impose so heavy a charge upon the country, ought we to have nothing before us to direct our judgment? Is the demand of the minister to justify us to the public? The extent of preparation should scarcely regulate the measure of defence. An honourable baronet terms this a half measure, such I cannot consider it, was it even at the commencement, instead of the fourth year of the most expensive war this country was ever engaged in; can every man consider a burden of three millions as nothing, and that exclusive of all taxes which may be requisite to carry on the war, should it be forced upon us, can the taking so large a body of the people from their useful employments be viewed a measure of no hardship. I confess myself perfectly unable to discover by what standard, the honourable baronet makes his estimate, not surely by his own ability and readiness to contribute to the burthens. That would be a mode that would suit but few: If he wishes to know the real situation of the country, let him look to the middling and lower classes of the people,

people, for there he can only learn it. Have they made no sacrifice! would to God that was the case; that our duty may compel us to impose yet further burthens, but let the necessity proceed to justify us and reconcile the country, let the caution with which we grant, shew we feel and regret what it is out of our power to prevent. Sir, having no means of knowing what may be the forwardness or extent of preparations carrying on in France, if any such there be, that occasions the present alarm, I am under the necessity of forming my opinion, of the probability of such an event, from the relative situation of the two countries, now and at the time when we were supposed to be in such a state of perfect security; I am fully aware, the fact may be contrary to all reasoning upon it, if so it is more necessary than ever that ministers should be explicit. Sir, the honourable secretary when he rated our security so highly, attributed much of it, to the spirit and loyalty with which the country had come forward and armed itself. I am not to be told the present additional force is rendered necessary from any abatement of that spirit, on the contrary, Sir, I think there is just ground to rate it higher than at any former period. The justice, policy and necessity of the war were doubted by many, and interest foreign to that of the people was supposed the real ground of the war, such opinions are not applicable at the present moment; if we are forced to contend for our existence, but one sentiment and feeling can animate the nation. I beg the House to revert to the situation of the country when we were stated to be completely secure from all danger of invasion. The two Houses of parliament had come to a resolution that a traiterous plot and conspiracy existed in the country, the alarm was general, could any season have been so flattering to our enemies, if they even seriously entertained an idea of invading us, or been so formidable to ourselves, when the existence of England and its constitution was represented as not the cause of every Englishman. Ignorant of the conspirators, men rated them by their fears and prejudices; to keep alive this alarm, no little pains was taken; a few months however afforded the country much satisfaction and comfort, and added greatly to its security also in my opinion. Repeated and solemn trials negatived the plot, and absolved the country from the foul imputation; by this event our enemies were fully undeceived, if they ever hoped to find support amongst ourselves. The contemptible light indeed in which ministers were placed,

was not likely to inspire great respect or fear of them in our enemies. They would however entertain no doubt that every arm would be raised to oppose them. If such a season was not profited of by our enemies, not dreaded by our rulers, what have we now to fear. The American war produced strong opposition in this House, still more powerful on the part of the people. What does this moment present? A phenomenon in politics never before seen!—a minister still guides the helm, who has proved himself unable to direct the power of the country with vigour or effect, whose measures have heaped upon us disasters and disgrace,---a minister who has imposed burdens beyond all former ministers,---whose innovations upon the constitution threaten its existence,---who has nailed up the mouths of a best majority of the nation, and established triumphantly, the *system of barracks* in every part of the kingdom,---and yet Sir, his Majesty confides, ---the nation is passive, and those in this House who have neither confidence or opinion of him, do not wish to embarrass his measures. Sir, do our well-grounded hopes of security rest here?---No. Have the glorious achievements of our navy contributed nothing to our safety? Is the bravery, the unparalleled skill and exertions of our gallant seamen, an empty and barren theme of praise, and calculated only to flatter our national feelings? Was our navy ever so numerous at any former period?---No; his Majesty tells us with a pride, in which every Englishman shares, that with few exceptions, we have been able to confine our enemies to their ports!---What has happened to occasion this sad reverse, that we must tremble for our safety? I profess, sir, this is a mystery I cannot comprehend. What was the situation of France when our boasted security was so great?---France was in possession of Holland, and the Netherlands, the emperor's armies were driven into the heart of Germany; our brave troops were expelled Holland, and after surmounting many dangers and difficulties, found an *hospitable asylum* in Hanover. Spain and Sardinia had every thing to fear;---our subsidizing friend Prussia, had become the ally of France; ---the elector of Hanover had made his peace also with the republic;---the internal commotions of France had in a measure subsided. In such a situation of power on the part of France.---England represented as distracted and divided with factions.---could any thing offer so fair a prospect of success? and yet our enemies awed by the insurmountable difficulties of the prospect, contented themselves with threatening us. To the hardships of scarcity has succeeded the blessings of plenty;

plenty; under all our sufferings we enjoy many comforts. The great preparations of the present campaign on the continent, are ended without procuring to France any additional advantages. On the contrary, she appears less able to hazard an attack upon us now, than at the conclusion of the last campaign. Our situation seems to have every thing to deter and discourage our enemies from such an attempt. With such a view of the subject, I can see nothing to justify my belief of the danger, and cannot but consider this measure as applicable to other purposes:—it is, Sir, to enable ministers to proceed with the system of conquests in the West Indies. If it be, I have no hesitation in saying, I would not grant a man for that service. If our navy be not yet on a footing to destroy and annihilate the trade of our enemies, render it so; great as our expences have been for that purpose, no one will regret or wish to narrow those exertions. Sir, if we are compelled to carry on the war, union and exertion are the duties of all. I would relinquish for the present, and endeavour to *restore*, secure, and preserve the constitution we are born to, and lend all our force to obtain a secure and lasting peace, the blessings of which would in my opinion be ineffectual to restore the country to happiness and prosperity, if unattended with great and radical reforms. Sir, if it be made out to me, that contrary to all rational supposition the danger is real, I shall not object to the propositions of the right honourable gentleman, because they seem a copy of what he has bestowed so much eloquence to reprobate. I shall not object to them as vesting in the crown such great additional powers, nor shall I fear putting arms in the hands of the people. If the danger be real, I am as disposed as any gentleman in this House to grant every thing that can be fairly required, but till convinced of that, I shall think myself justified in giving my opposition to the whole plan before us.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

THURSDAY, *November 3.*

Made orders upon some private petitions.

Read a second time Mr. Opie's divorce bill;

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

CORN.

Mr. *Ryder* moved the order of the day on the bill for allowing the importation of corn. Which being read,

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He moved, "That it be an instruction to the committee that they have power to receive a clause. The substance of which is, that damaged corn, such as is not fit for the food of man, shall be used for distillery, and in the manufacture of hair powder, starch, &c. This he proposed to be allowed under such checks as may render it impossible that wheat which may be fit for the food of man shall be used for the distillery, starch, powder, &c. He meant that there should be a proper inspection of corn before it shall be so used. One measure was, that the corn for which certificate of its being fit for human food had been refused, should be allowed to be distilled, as that refusal had already determined the quality of the corn. Another was, that none other should be used for distillery, &c. but such as shall be allowed by license of the commissioners of excise.

The instruction which he proposed to be given to the committee being agreed to, the House formed itself into a committee of the whole House. Adopted the regulations which were proposed.

The report was received immediately, and the bill was ordered to be engrossed.

General *Tarleton* moved, That the account of the additional charge of the public debt, by the interest on loans, subsequent to the 27th year of the reign of George the third, be printed.

Ordered.

The speaker informed the House that Thomas B. Howell, esq. on whose behalf a petition had been presented, complaining of an undue election for Cirencester, had not entered into the recognizance required by law.

Order on the petition discharged.

The other petition of the electors of the borough was ordered to be taken into consideration on the 20th of December next.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* moved the order of the day for the third reading of the cavalry bill, which being done,

Mr. *Biddulph* said, he conceived the bill to be a kind of requisition bill, and not of revenue, and therefore where proper persons were not to be found to perform service, it should be incumbent on the deputy receivers general to provide men in their stead. He said he should move a clause upon the subject.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he did not think the honourable gentleman's proposition practicable, as he did not know the receiver general would be in possession of the
necessary

necessary funds for providing men, besides, he conceived it would be too much for the receiver general to have that trouble cast upon him. He wished the gentleman therefore to alter his intended motion.

Mr. *Biddulph* not being able immediately to have the clause ready, the debate was adjourned.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* moved, That the other orders of the day be read.

The first order was the call of the House, which the Chancellor of the exchequer proposed to be postponed to the 24th of November.

Mr. *Sheridan* wished to know whether the call was then intended to be an effectual one?

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said he was desirous of having a full attendance, but the House would then determine whether the call should be enforced or not.

Mr. *Fox* observed, there was no rule whereby any person could be bound to enforce a call, but it was usual for gentlemen to say what their opinions were, whether the call would be enforced or not, for obvious reasons. If gentlemen had an understanding that the call was merely to enforce a ballot, they would rest secured that would be formed, and the attendance would not be so full as if they actually expected the call to take place. He therefore wished to know, whether the minister had any important public business to bring forward about that time?

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he trusted he should be able, (without confining himself strictly to the day) to bring forward the ways and means of the year, on the 23d of this month.

The House was then ordered to be called over on the 24th of November.

GAMEKEEPERS.

The order of the day for the second reading of the game-keepers bill being read.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that doubts had been entertained with regard to this measure, and as the game-keepers, if enrolled, were not intended to be trained, there was no particular reason for pressing the measure forward. He therefore proposed the discussion should be postponed until after the recess. He then moved, "That instead of reading the bill now, it be read on the 25th of November."

Mr.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, that if he agreed to this motion, it must be from a conviction that the minister would never think of the bill again. If he did not think that the minister had been better advised upon this subject than he was when he brought it forward, and that the House should hear no more of it, he should have moved that this bill be read this day nine months. If the minister would be frank upon the subject, and confess his error upon the matter, he would say nothing upon it afterwards—else he should make his motion now. The House had lately heard a good deal about recognizances. If the right hon. gentleman would enter into a recognizance that they should hear no more of the subject, he should be satisfied; otherwise he must proceed to shew that the bill was a stigma on the good sense of the House and the nation; a bill of such pernicious and foul principles, that he was confident he should persuade the House, if not the minister, to reject it with indignation. He had too much esteem for the good sense of the Chancellor of the exchequer, to believe that he was the author of such a bill; somebody must have put into his hand, in the form of a bill, a bad translation of a German romance.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that he was too much accustomed to hard epithets as applied to him, to be easily provoked into a debate, upon a subject which did not require it, and therefore he should not take notice of the remarks which were made upon this bill. All the recognizance he should enter into was, that he should before the 25th of November, give the honourable gentleman notice what he intended to propose with regard to this bill.

The House then resolved itself into a committee on the army and navy augmentation bill; which was divided afterwards into two bills. It is proposed in them, among other things, that the number of men to be raised, are, for the navy, 6,000, for the army, 9,000.

The bill having passed the committee, the report was ordered to be received the next day.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, Nov. 4.

The militia augmentation Bill was read a second time and committed for Monday,

The

The army and navy quota Bill for England, and the army and navy quota Bill for Scotland, the Bill for permitting the importation of organzined silk were brought up from the House of Commons, and read a first time.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, Nov. 4.

The *Speaker* informed the House, that the electors of the borough of Tregony had not entered into the recognizance required by law in consequence of the petition presented on their behalf complaining of an undue election for that borough. Order upon that petition discharged.

The same circumstances with regard to the borough of Cirencester. Order discharged in the same manner.

The same also for the city of Worcester, in which case Edmund Lechmere Jun. was the petitioner. Order discharged like manner.

SOUTHWARK ELECTION COMMITTEE.

Mr. Thomas *Grenville*, chairman of the committee balloted to try the election for the Borough of Southwark, stated, that Alexander Morris had disobeyed the summons of that committee; and therefore he moved, by the direction of such committee, "That the said Alexander Morris be taken into custody of the Serjeant at Arms attending that House."

The *Speaker* said the House would understand that the act of the 10th of the King gave power to a committee to report to the House circumstances of witnesses either disobeying the summons of the committee, giving false evidence, or prevaricating. By the 28th of the King the committee were empowered to act for themselves, without motion to the House, if any witness disobeyed their summons, gave false evidence, or prevaricated. The committee had made their choice, in the present instance, of the provisions in the former act, in which they were not irregular, as they might make choice of either, the provisions of the two acts not being repugnant to each other. To shew this, he desired the clerk to read the clauses of the two acts relating to this case; which being done, it appeared the *Speaker* was perfectly accurate in his recollection.

The motion was then put, that Alexander Morris be taken into the custody of the Serjeant at Arms.—

Ordered.

The Bill for funding the navy debt, &c, was read a second time, and ordered to be committed to a committee of the whole House.

Mr. *Courtenay* moved that an account of the outstanding ordnance debentures, stating the sums for which they were issued, be laid before the House. Ordered.

The report of the army and navy augmentation Bill, as far as relates to Scotland, was brought up, read and agreed to. After which the Bill was ordered to be engrossed,

Some clauses were brought up by the Lord Advocate of Scotland.

Mr. *Frazer* said, he wished that some principle of proportion should be adopted, that the Bill might fall fairly on the respective counties. The *quotas* bore no proportion to the land tax, and the population of the country. The calculations had been collected from the statements of Mr. Webster in 1755, since that time, however, a great alteration had occurred. Sir John Sinclair had made statistical accounts of nine-tenths of the parishes of Scotland, and from those it appeared, that the general population of that kingdom had increased 300,000. Some counties it was true, had been stationary in their population, a few had decreased; but the general population had increased 300,000. The *quotas*, therefore ought to have been discriminative, and to have been regulated by the population of the different parishes. That the principle of population was a fair one he acknowledged, because the principle of the Bill was to procure men. There was, however, another point which he had particularly to press. It related to the highlanders, a brave, hardy, and serviceable race, who were much attached to their chiefs, and would be much hurt in being forced to serve under other commanders. He wished, therefore, that a provision might be made for permitting them to serve under their particular chieftains.

The *Lord Advocate of Scotland* observed, that the operation of the Bill would not partially affect any individual parish; since it was left to the discretion of the magistrates to throw two, three, or four parishes together, if necessary. The other matters mentioned by the honourable gentleman were were points for which it was difficult, if not impossible, to make legislative provision; but he had no doubt that great care would be taken by his Majesty's servants, to extend as far as possible indulgences of the kind to which the hon. gentleman alluded.

The

The Bill was then read a third time and passed.

A message from the Lords informed the House, their lordships had passed Mr. Opie's divorce Bill, and had agreed to a private Bill.

The Bill for allowing the importation of corn, and allowing corn of a certain quality to be distilled, and wheat flour of a certain quality to be used as starch, powder, &c. was read a third time and passed.

Mr. *Hussey* took notice of the article of coffee, in which there was a great difference between the importation and the exportation; the value of the exportation being much larger than that of the importation; the first being stated at 200,000 and the latter at 6,600,000. He wished to know whether this was an error, and if so, to what the error was owing?

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, said, that in one sense, the account was incorrect, because the accounts of the custom house were so. The valuation of coffee was made different in the importation, from that of the exportation, neither of which was correct; but they were not stated of the same value in the two cases, and that was the only solution he was able to give.

The army and navy augmentation Bill, was read a third time, and ordered to be carried to the Lords by the Secretary at War.

THE BUDGET.

The other order of the day being read,

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that since he gave notice the preceding day that he intended to open the ways and means, he had reflected that many members of that House would probably be in the country on that day, on account of the Bills that were now before parliament. It was his desire to have as full an attendance as possible on the opening the ways and means, and therefore, with the permission of the House, instead of Wednesday the 23d, he should appoint Friday the 25th of November for that purpose, and with that view he moved, That the House should resolve itself into a committee of the whole House on Friday the 25th of November to consider of ways and means for raising the supplies.—

Ordered.

CAVALRY BILL.

The House then proceeded to consider a clause which was proposed by Mr. Biddulph, to be added to the cavalry Bill by way of rider.

Mr. *Biddulph* stated, that having the day before proposed a clause to the consideration of the House, which he conceived was not objected to in principle, the wording of which was not sufficiently correct and formal to carry his intentions into effect, he submitted it to the candour of the House, whether he might not be allowed to withdraw that clause, and present another more technically drawn. His proposal being assented to, he stated the object of his clause to be, that if in any class no sufficient and able bodied man, fit for military duty, should be found, and the case being certified by the deputy lieutenants, at a sub-division meeting, to the receiver general of the county, he should advance to the person chosen by ballot to furnish the man in that class, such sum as should be certified by the deputy lieutenants to be the price sufficient to procure a volunteer in that district.

The clause being brought up and read,

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that having since had some communication with the mover of the clause, and having found it to be his intention to carry the operation of it so much further than he had at first conceived, he should be obliged to object to it, and should propose another in its stead. That, by the present clause, the persons, though, possibly men of six or seven thousand a year, would be allowed to apply to the deputy lieutenants for a certificate to receive three or four pounds from the receiver general, which surely must appear to the House highly unnecessary—that, as the honourable gentleman had confessed, it was not intended to go further in this case than in that, in which no horse should be found in the class, the clause he should propose would provide that the receiver general should be reimbursed by an assessment, to be levied on all the persons contained in the class, as was provided in the clause before alluded to.

Mr. *Biddulph* confessed that his meaning had been very distinctly expressed by the right honourable gentleman, and he avowed it to be, that if a man of 100,000l. a year should be in the class, and unfit for military duty, that he should not be bound to find a substitute. Mr. B. said he did not consider this to be a Bill of revenue, but of requisition, or a tax in kind: that where the thing required was not found, that a tax in money ought not to be demanded. As to the circumstance in the other clause alluded to, of the horse to be paid for by the receiver general, he had not adverted to the provision that he was to be reimbursed by an assessment on the

the persons in the class, and if such were the case it was an aggravation of the injustice and iniquity of the Bill. When horses were found in the class, they were lent to government for a temporary service, but that in this case, money was to be taken out of the pockets of the people never to return, as the horse was to be delivered to the deputy lieutenants on their demand, and sold for the public account.

Mr. *Biddulph's* clause was negatived, and the *Chancellor of the Exchequer's* received.

Mr. *Sheridan* expressed his apprehension, that the discretion given to the magistrates to enforce the execution of the Bill might become oppressive by abuse.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* declared his reliance on the integrity of the magistrates in general. If, however, any inconvenience should be felt, it might soon be removed, since there was a provision in the bill, whereby the legislature might alter it in the present session.

Mr. *Sheridan* had no doubt of the integrity of the magistrates in general, but he regarded the Westminster justices with some suspicion; he feared they would mark out some seditious fellows as the objects of severity. As to the remedy of altering the bill in the present session, it should be observed that the grievance may be severely felt before any remedy could be thought of. The bill was then passed.

A stranger rose up in the front of the gallery, and called out "Treason, treason;" he held a paper in his hand. The *Speaker* immediately ordered him to be taken into custody, and the serjeant at arms to clear the gallery. The gallery was cleared, and the stranger taken into custody, but discovered such evident marks of derangement, that he was immediately dismissed. After his first violent out-cry of treason, he uttered some incoherent expressions to those around him, "That he would disclose treason at the bar of the House." He shewed no other symptoms of insanity, except what appeared in his expressions. He made no attempt to resist those who took him into custody, and when suffered to depart went off quietly.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, November 7.

The House went through the militia augmentation bill in a committee.

The bill for raising a certain number of men for the army and navy in England, the bill for raising a certain number of men

men for the same service in Scotland, and the bill for allowing the importation of organzine thrown silk were read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

The cavalry bill was brought up by the Chancellor of the exchequer, from the House of Commons, and read a first time.

Heard counsel in the Scotch appeal, Ferguson and co. against Douglas, Heron, and co.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Sir *Edward Knatchbull* brought up a report from the committee appointed to try the merits of the election for the borough of Southwark, stating that the committee had this morning received a letter from Mr. Thomas Grenville, their chairman, intimating that, on account of the death of a near relation, it would be impossible for him to attend their meetings.

Upon the motion of Sir Edward Knatchbull, the House sustained the excuse, agreeable to a precedent in 1791.

Sir *John Rous Boughton* brought up the report of the committee appointed to try the merits of the election for the borough of Malmesbury, which confirm the election and return, but stating the petitions to have been neither frivolous nor vexatious.

Mr. *John Smith* from the select committee, who were appointed to try and determine the merits of the petition of John George Philips, esq. complaining of an undue election for the county of the borough of Carmarthen, informed the House, that the said committee have determined,

That *Magens Dorrien Magens*, esq. is not duly elected, and that *John George Philips*, esq. the petitioner, ought to have been returned, and also that the said *John George Philips*, esq. is duly elected a burgess to serve in the present parliament, for the county of the borough of Carmarthen.

The deputy clerk of the crown was ordered to attend next day, and amend the return.

The committee on the Quakers' bill was postponed to Wednesday fortnight.

The bill for funding the navy debt passed through a committee of the whole house. In the committee Mr. Rose moved that the holders of the bills when they deliver in the bills at the different offices, shall state what kind of stock they make

make choice of, and that they shall be bound by that statement. Agreed.

The House being resumed, the report was ordered to be received the next day.

A person from the navy-office presented the account of navy bills moved for by Mr. Hufley on a former evening.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, November 8.

The earl of *Derby* moved, that the petition of *James* earl of *Lauderdale*, complaining of an undue election and return of the sixteen peers of Scotland, be heard this day three weeks.

Ordered accordingly.

Their lordships heard counsel on the Scots appeal, ———
Ferguson, esq. and others, against *Douglas*, *Heron*, and co. adjourned from the preceding day,—after which they postponed the further consideration of the case till Thursday.

The militia augmentation bill was read a third time, and passed, and a message was sent to the commons to acquaint that House therewith.

The provisional cavalry force bill was read a second time, and committed for the next day.

Their lordships in a committee of the whole House, lord *Walsingham* in the chair, went through the bill for raising a certain number of men for the service of the army and navy in England; the bill for raising men for the like services in Scotland; the corn import regulation bill; and the organized thrown silk bill. And the House resuming, agreed to the reports of those bills, and ordered them to be severally read a third time to-morrow.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, November 8.

Sir *James Mordaunt* has leave of absence for five weeks, on account of ill health.

Reville's naturalization bill was read a first time.

The clerk of the crown attended, and amended *Carmarthen* return.

Petitions for *Thetford* assizes, and for naturalizing ———
Borell, were presented, and bills ordered.

Grunciffon's

Grunciffon's naturalization, and Dudley canal bills, were read a second time, and committed.

Opie's divorce bill was read a second time, and committed for the 23d of November.

Petition against Weymouth water bill presented.

Ordered to lie on the table.

Chichester roads petition reported, and bill ordered.

The indemnity bill was reported, and ordered to be engrossed.

A message from the lords stated, that their lordships had agreed to the militia augmentation bill.

The report of the bill for funding the navy bills was agreed to, and the bill ordered to be read a third time tomorrow.

The land-tax commissioners name bill was read a second time.

Several members took the oaths.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, November 9.

The army and navy augmentation bill, the augmentation bill for Scotland, the corn import regulation bill, the organized thrown silk bill, and the provisional cavalry force bill, were read a third time and passed.

The bill for funding the navy debt was brought from the commons, and read a first time.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

A message was received from the lords, signifying their lordships assent to the county quota bills for England and Scotland, the provisional cavalry bill, the corn bill, and the organized thrown silk importation bill, without any amendment.

The bill for funding the navy debt was read a third time and passed.

The test act indemnity bill was read a second time.

A new writ was ordered for the borough of Malmesbury, in the room of Samuel Smith, esq. who has made his election for the borough of Leicester.

Adjourned.

HOUSE

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THURSDAY, *November 10.*

Gave judgment on the Scots appeal, Jamefon and co. appellants, against Laurie, respondent, reversing the judgment of the court of session, and affirming the interlocutor of the lord ordinary.

The test act indemnity bill, was brought up from the commons, and read a first time.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, *November 10.*

Mr. *Baldwin* brought up the report of the committee appointed to try the merits of the election for the borough of Camelford, which declares the right of election to be vested in the inhabitants paying scot and lot. G. J. Dennistone and J. Angerstein, esqrs. to be duly elected; but the petitions of the honourable Augustus Ludlow and Robert Adair, esq. not to be frivolous.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, *November 11.*

The royal assent was given by commission to the militia augmentation bill, the land and sea service quota bills for England and Scotland, the bill for prohibiting the exportation of corn, the bill for allowing the importation of organzine thrown silk, &c. The commissioners were, the lord chancellor, the archbishop of Canterbury, and earl of Liverpool.

The test act indemnity bill was read a third time and passed.

Judgment was given in the Scotch appeal, Grants, trustees, against Douglas, Heron, and co. by which various interlocutors of the court of session were reversed.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, *November 11.*

Upon the motion of the *Chancellor of the Exchequer* the different orders of the day, as they stood in the book, were postponed as follows:

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The call of the House to the 29th of November.

The petition, complaining of an undue election and return for the borough of Leominster on the 29th of November.

The supply on the 28th of November.

The ways and means of the year to the 30th of November.

Another committee of ways and means to the 28th of November.

Mr. *Opie's* divorce bill, to the 28th of November.

The second reading of the gamekeepers bill on the first of December.

A message from the lords informed the House their lordships had agreed to the bill for funding the navy debt, without any amendment.

Mr. *Ross* moved, that a new writ be issued for the borough of Westloe, in Devonshire, in the room of John Buller, esq. who has accepted the chiltern hundreds.

Ordered.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

SATURDAY, *November 12.*

The royal assent was given, by commission, to the Bill for funding the navy debt.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

SATURDAY, *November 12.*

Sir *Edward Knatchbull*, from the select committee, who were appointed to try and determine the merits of the petition of George Tierney, complaining of an undue election and return for the Borough of Southwark, informed the House, that the said select committee have determined,

That George Woodford Thelluffon, Esq. is not duly elected a burgher to serve in this present Parliament for the said Borough of Southwark.

And also that the said select committee have determined, that the last election for the said Borough of Southwark, so far as relates to the said George Woodford Thelluffon, Esq. is void.

And also, that the said select committee have determined, that the petition of the said George Tierney did not appear to the said select committee to be frivolous or vexatious.

And

And also that the said select committee have determined, that the opposition of the said George Woodford Thelluffon, Esq. to the said petition, did not appear to the said select committee to be frivolous or vexatious.

And the said determinations were ordered to be entered in the journals of the House.

Ordered,

That Mr. Speaker do issue his warrant to the clerk of the Crown, to make out a new writ for electing of a Burgess to serve in this present Parliament for the Borough of Southwark, in the county of Surry, in the room of George Woodford Thelluffon, Esq. whose election for the said Borough has been determined to be void.

Sir Edward Knatchbull also reported from the said select committee, that they had come to a resolution which they had directed him to report to the House; and he read the report in his place, and afterwards delivered it in at the table where the same was read and the resolution of the committee is as followeth, viz.

Resolved,

That it appears to this committee, that at the last election for the Borough of Southwark, George Woodford Thelluffon, Esq. did act in violation of the statute of the 7th of William III. chap. 4. whereby he is incapacitated to serve in Parliament upon such election.

Ordered,

That the said report do lie upon the table.

Sir Edward Knatchbull said, the House would recollect, that an honourable member of the Committee on the Southwark election, had complained of the non-attendance of a person of the name of *Alexander Morris*, and his disobedience to the summons of the Committee; in consequence of which, there was an order of the House, that the said Alexander Morris be taken into the custody of the Serjeant at Arms. He did not complain of the Serjeant at Arms, for it appeared that he had done his duty. The man, however, had not appeared. He did not alledge this on behalf of the petitioner, Mr. Tierney. The object of his petition was answered, for he had made his case good. What he now said was on behalf of every member of that House, and of every man who had a petition referred to a Committee of that House. He hoped that this person when he came to the bar of that House to answer for his disobedience, would be taken such notice of as his conduct deserved.

The

The House then adjourned to Monday the 28th of Nov. instant.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, Nov. 28.

The *Earl of Kinnoul* presented a petition on behalf of the Earl of Errol praying that the committee of privileges on the Earl of Lauderdale's petition should be deferred till the first Tuesday after Christmas.

The *Earl of Derby* said, that on the part of the Earl of Lauderdale he had no objection to the prayer of the petition being granted, because it was his wish that the noble lord (Errol) should be fully prepared upon the subject of the petition presented at the instance of his noble friend (lord Lauderdale); at the same he would wish it to be understood that the committee of privileges should set on the first Tuesday after Christmas, and that no farther delay should take place.

Their Lordships heard Counsel at the bar upon the Scotch appeal, *McDonald v. Burt*.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, Nov. 28.

The *Speaker* informed the House, that lists had been given in of persons to be ballotted for composing the India judicatures under the act of the 26th of his majesty.

A new writ was ordered for Bath in the room of lord viscount Weymouth, called up to the House of Peers.

Mr. *Grey* moved, That on or before the 8th day of Feb. next, the freeholders of the county of Kent, who had petitioned against the return for that county, should by themselves or their agents give in lists of the persons whose votes had been objected to, with the heads of the objections, and that the fitting member should deliver similar lists to the petitioners.

Sir *W. Geary* said, he had no objection to the motion, which was agreed to.

General *Tarleton* moved, That there be laid before the House accounts of the money coined during the years 1793, 1794, 1795, and 1796, distinguishing the amount of each year; of the application of the sum of 2,500,000*l.* voted last

last session of Parliament; of the navy, victualling, and transport bills issued in the month of November, and up to the 31st of December; of the navy, victualling, transport, and exchequer bills, subscribed for the purpose of being funded, and the particular stock to which it was to be added; and of the navy, victualling, and transport bills due or to become due between the 1st of January and the 31st of December, 1796, which were all agreed to, and the accounts ordered to be printed.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* gave notice that he meant to postpone the opening of the budget till this day se'n-night.

Mr. *Sergeant* brought up the ordnance estimate for the year 1797.

The committee on the Quakers bill was put off till Thursday se'n-night.

Went into a committee, and heard counsel on Opie's Divorce bill.

The committees of supply, and ways and means were put off till Wednesday.

A message from the House of Lords acquainted the House that their lordships had agreed to the annual test indemnity bill.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, Nov. 29.

Heard counsel on an appeal, wherein Alexander M'Donald, writer to the signet, was appellant, and Robert Burt, apothecary in Edinburgh, was respondent; and, on the motion of Lord Thurlow, the interlocutor was reversed.

Adjourned to Thursday.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, Nov. 29.

Mr. Grey presented a petition from George Tierney, Esq. complaining against an undue election and return for the Borough of Southwark.

The principal points of the petition were; That George Woodford Thelluffon, Esq. was rendered incapable of serving in Parliament for that Borough by the decision of the committee appointed to try the merits of the first election; That,
at

at the last election, prize-fighters were employed on the part of Mr. Thellusson, to obstruct the poll; that Mr. Jones, the marshal of the King's Bench prison, brought forward persons confined for debt to vote for Mr. Thellusson, and that their votes were taken contrary to law; and, lastly, that bribery was employed by Mr. Thellusson to bias the votes of the electors.

The petition being read,

Mr. Grey said that he understood there were some doubts entertained respecting the propriety of receiving the petition at this time, for his own part he conceived it to be perfectly regular.

The *Speaker* said that it rested with the House to determine whether, as the certificate from the returning officer had not been delivered to the House, they would receive the petition, or whether they would be contented with the return which had been made to the office of the crown, if such return was actually made; and if it was not made, whether they would be satisfied with the knowledge they had of the election having taken place.

Mr. Grey professed not to know whether the return had been sent to the crown office, but if it was not, it was the fault of the returning officer. But though it was not, it could be no objection to receiving the petition, because if such an objection was sustained, it would be in the power of any candidate to prevent a petition being presented against him by delaying to give in his certificate.

Mr. Whitbread said, there was certainly no impropriety in presenting the petition, and he hoped that an early day would be appointed for taking it into consideration. He desired that the resolution of the last committee upon the Southwark election should be read, and likewise a resolution of the House against practising bribery at elections. The resolutions being read, Mr. Whitbread expressed a hope that the House would vindicate its own honour and dignity by taking particular notice of these resolutions, and the conduct of Mr. Thellusson in the Southwark election, and he intimated an intention of moving something to that effect. This he would defer till after the merits of this election were tried; at the same time he hoped that the consideration of the petition would take place of others, that a decision might be passed as early as possible upon a subject of so much importance. He therefore moved, that the petition be taken into consideration on this day fortnight, meaning to follow up the decision of the committee with some other motions.

The

The petition was ordered to be taken into consideration on Tuesday the 13th of December.

The *Speaker* announced, for the satisfaction of the House, that the return had been made at the crown office.

A new writ was ordered for the borough of Saltsash, for the election of a burgess to serve in parliament, in the room of Edward Bearcroft, esq. deceased.

Another writ was ordered for the borough of Winchelsea, in the room of Richard Barwell, Esq.

The call of the House was postponed till Tuesday next.

A committee was appointed to try the merits of the election for the borough of Leominster :

And a committee to try the merits of the election for Milbourne port :

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, *November 30.*

Mr. *Manning* presented a petition from a variety of merchants of the city, setting forth the inconveniencies arising from the inadequate accommodation for the increased shipping of the port of London, and praying that the House would take the premises into consideration, and afford such relief as they should think fit.

The petition was referred to a committee, consisting of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the members for the city of London, for the county of Northumberland, and the members for the maritime counties.

Sir *William Young* moved, that there be laid before the House, the report of the Commissioners of the Customs, to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, relative to the different plans submitted to their consideration, for the accommodation of the shipping in the port of London.

Mr. Alderman *Anderson* seconded the motion, and said, he was happy that this report was to be laid before the House, and he hoped it would be printed for the use of the members. The city of London was aware of the inconveniencies felt from the inadequate accommodation for the increased shipping of the port, and that they had turned their attention to the subject, and with this report in their eye, they had certain plans for the improvement of the accommodation of the shipping.

shipping, which when brought forward he hoped would meet with the approbation of the House.

Ordered.

Mr. *Rose* moved for the accounts of the money expended for the convicts in the hulks, on the river Thames, in Portsmouth harbour, &c.

Ordered.

Mr. *Rose* moved, That an address should be presented to his Majesty, praying that he would be graciously pleased to order to be laid before the House, accounts of all monies issued in consequence of addresses, and not made good by parliament.

Upon the motion of Mr. *Metcalf*, the order for taking into consideration the petition presented by T. Burgefs, Esq. against the return for the borough of Bridport, was discharged.

The order of the day for the House to go into a committee of supply being moved,

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he should take this opportunity to give notice, that it was intended to move certain army estimates and extraordinaries of the navy, which had not yet been brought forward, in a committee of supply on Friday next.

The House went into a committee of supply.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* moved, That it is the opinion of the committee that the sum of 420,000*l.* of disposable surplus, remaining in the Exchequer, be applied towards making good the grants of this year, which was agreed to.

The House being resumed, the report was ordered to be received to-morrow.

The committee of supply and ways and means to be gone into on Friday.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THURSDAY, *December 1.*

Heard several petitions, and made orders on them.

Adjourned to Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, *December 1.*

A new writ was ordered to be made out by the clerk of the crown for the borough of Higham Ferrers, to elect a burgefs

burgess to serve in parliament, in the room of Serjeant Adair, who has accepted the office of chief justice of Chester.

Mr. *Hobart* brought up a report from the committee appointed to make out a list of the gentlemen who are capacitated to act under the India judicature bill.

The report of the committee of ways and means was brought up, and the resolutions were agreed to by the House.

The order of the day for the second reading of the gamekeepers bill was postponed till the next day.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, *December 2.*

The *Speaker* informed the House, that he had received a letter stating that Alexander Morris, against whom an order had been issued for his not appearing to give evidence upon the trial of the petition on the Southwark election, was now in custody of the serjeant at arms.

The *Master of the Rolls* moved that Alexander Morris be detained in the custody of the serjeant at arms, and ordered to appear at the bar on Monday.

Ordered.

An account of the money coined from the year 1793 to 1796 inclusive, was brought up from the mint, and ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. *Coke* said, he rose in pursuance of the notice he had given the preceding day, to move for leave to bring in a bill. He should not enter into the details of the bill which he meant to propose, but when he stated that it regarded the administration of justice in this country, it would immediately be recognized by the House as of the utmost importance. The general purpose of the bill was to allow actions and indictments within limited jurisdictions to be tried in the county at large. Formerly in this country, when men were better than they are now, it was found perfectly consistent with the purposes of justice that people should be tried almost at their own doors; but now when circumstances are changed, when a cause is in a manner prejudged by the conversation which it excites in every ale-house in the neighbourhood of the person concerned in it, it was very difficult for a man to obtain a fair trial within the limited jurisdiction in which the offence was committed. The Bill then was intended to leave at the

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option of the party, whether he should be tried within such limited jurisdiction, and to enable him to obtain his trial within the county at large. The grievances which the Bill was intended to remedy had been long felt, and it had fallen from the highest authority in the country, the chief justice of the court of King's Bench, as a great inconvenience, and a hope was expressed, that 'ere long a Bill would be brought into parliament to remove it. There were two places, Hull and Poole, the corporations of which had the privilege of praying for a commission for the trial of offences within their jurisdiction, but as it was attended with expence they seldom applied for it till the prisons were almost full, in consequence of which very great inconveniencies were felt by persons whose trials were thus delayed. The Bill was intended to enable persons in such a situation to apply for a Habeas Corpus to be removed to the county gaol, and to take their trial before the county at large, if they thought fit. He said that he meant to except from the operation of the Bill the city of London. Having thus far explained the general outline, he should move for leave to bring in a Bill for regulating the trials on certain actions and indictments that arise within certain limited jurisdictions and bodies corporate within this kingdom.

Mr. *Lefevre* seconded the motion. Leave was given, and Mr. Coke, Mr. Lefevre, the attorney and solicitor general, and the gentlemen of the long robe, appointed to prepare and bring in the same.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that as some farther time would be requisite for making out the different arrangements that were necessary, he meant to defer the Budget, which was fixed for Monday, till Wednesday next.

Mr. *Fox* said, that he wished, and he dared say the hon. gentleman wished also, that the House should have accurate accounts of the extent of the navy debt, previous to any general consideration of the financial state of the country. He meant that the account of the money issued for the service of the navy should be made out down to the end of November. He was sensible it could not be perfectly accurate, but it might be sufficient for a general view. He did not know how such an account was to be moved, but he imagined the right honourable gentleman would be ready to give the House the means of making as accurate a judgment as possible from the state of the country.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that it was impossible to have an accurate account of the navy debt, as it was composed

ed not merely of navy Bills, but arrears of which accounts were made up at particular times, and it would derange the whole business of the offices in which they were made up, should they at present be called upon to prepare these accounts. It was easy, however, to move for an account of the ready monies issued for the service of the navy since the month of October to the present time. In contemplation of the consideration necessary to be given to the subject, in laying before the House the financial state of the country for the present year, he should converse with those best acquainted with this particular department, and move for such accounts as could be prepared, and which would tend to give a more perfect view of the subject.

Mr. Fox said, the account for November would be as accurate as the account for October; he did not imagine it would be correct, but as far as it went it would furnish the House with more complete means of information.

Mr. Grey said, he had intended to move for the account alluded to, but he should not now push it, as it was said that it could not conveniently be produced. He, however, had other accounts for which he now meant to move, an account of the ordnance debt not provided up to the 30th November, 1796; of the old duty on foreign spirits for three years, ending 10th October, 1794; and also for one year, ending 10th October, 1796; of the duty on beer for three years, ending 10th October, 1794; and for one year ending 10th October, 1796, which was agreed to.

The order of the day for the second reading of the gamekeepers' Bill being read,

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he did not mean to trouble the House farther with this Bill at present; he should only farther say, that a clause might be introduced into some other Bill during the present session, to exempt from the ballot for the supplementary militia such gamekeepers as might chuse to enrol themselves voluntarily, with a power to call them out along with the militia of the district. He therefore moved, that the second reading of the Bill be postponed till that day six months, which was agreed to.

SUPPLY.

The order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a committee of supply being read, several army and navy estimates were referred to it; after which the House went into the committee, Mr. Hobart in the the chair.

The *Secretary at War* said, that these estimates were so much matter of course, and so little different from those of

last year, that he did not conceive that it was necessary for for him to say any thing upon them, and he should content himself with moving the different resolutions meant to be founded upon them. He moved as the first resolution, that the sum of 70,000*l.* be granted for horses furniture, &c. for the year 1797.

General Tarleton said, that when the army estimates were first brought forward he had remarked that the articles which had been omitted would amount to 580,000*l.* but in justice to his own accuracy he was bound now to observe that they amounted to 707,000*l.* In fact it was not very remarkable that he had committed this inaccuracy, for in a war in which every part of the expence had exceeded the calculation, it was not extraordinary that he here found the real amount beyond his computation. From the estimates now on the table it would appear that the expences of the army next year would be six millions. He understood, from common rumour, that it was still intended to persevere in the ruinous system of carrying on the war in the West Indies. He understood a new governor, a person indeed of high character, was to be sent out to St. Domingo, and that enterprises which had cost so much treasure and so many lives, were yet to be carried on without any possibility of advantage to this country. He should only say a word or two about the design which general report likewise circulated, to send an army to Portugal of ten or twelve thousand men. While ministers had come forward, and with the alarm of invasion stated the necessity of encreasing the military force of the country, there certainly was some inconsistency in such a design. If such a force was sent out of the country there could be no reason for the extraordinary measures which were brought forward for our defence. The game-keepers' Bill had been given up, and the cavalry Bill, which was calculated so much to annoy the people of this country, would likewise be abandoned if such a number of men could be spared. The army of Portugal was generally understood to be small, and the troops but ill disciplined. If the commanders who were sent with troops to join this ill-appointed body, could achieve any thing of importance, they certainly would be entitled to great credit. France was much nearer Portugal than we were, and in all probability the republicans would endeavour to stimulate the sluggishness of the Spaniards, with whom we were now at war, to attempt some thing against the Portuguese, and he was afraid that our assistance would only reduce them to that situation

situation, which had distinguished our former exertions in favour of Holland and our allies.

The *Secretary at War* said he should only say a few words upon those points of the honourable gentleman's speech, which at all bore upon the question. It was impossible to be perfectly accurate in the estimates for the service, and it was held to be safer to exceed than to fall under. He expected that some of the articles would fall short of their present amount, that particularly which regarded the money allowed for the subsistence of soldiers, as they would either be reduced upon a peace, or kept in barracks or quarters near the coast should the war be continued.

Sir *William Milner* asked if the accoutrements alluded to were for the cavalry to be raised in consequence of the late Bill?

The *Secretary at War* said, that it had no reference at all to the new cavalry Bill.

General Tarleton explained.

The first resolution was then put and agreed to.

The second resolution was then proposed, that the sum of 7500*l.* should be granted for reduced American Officers for the year 1797.

Mr. *Grey* wished to be informed when the extraordinaries of the army would be brought forward?

The *Secretary at War* said, that they would certainly be brought forward some time in the course of the session, but he did not know whether it would be regular to do so at so early a period of the session.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* observed, that there was a particular period fixed by act of parliament for producing the account of the army extraordinaries, which was not yet arrived; at the same time the amount of them would certainly be specified in the budget next week.

Mr. *Grey* replied that he believed it was usual to bring them forward before the first of February, but that when the session commenced at an early period, they were commonly laid before the House previous to the opening of the budget. It was certainly extremely necessary that the expences of the last year should be known before the House voted the estimates for the ensuing year.

The *Secretary at War* then moved, "That a sum not exceeding 45,00*l.* be granted to his Majesty, for defraying the expences of making certain roads and bridges in that part of Great Britain called Scotland."—Granted.

"That

"That a sum not exceeding 118,674*l.* be granted to his Majesty for the payment of reduced officers of the army and marine."—Granted.

"That a sum not exceeding 180,000*l.* be granted to his majesty for defraying the expence of the encreased rates of subsistence to innkeepers."—Granted,

"That a sum not exceeding 136,675*l.* be granted to his majesty to defray the expence of supernumerary officers of fencible regiments and independant companies."—Granted.

"That a sum not exceeding 136,679*l.* be granted to his majesty to defray the expences of the pay-master-general and commissaries for the army."—Granted.

Mr. *M. A. Taylor* asked, if there was not a new office created, of inspector-general of invalids, and if there was, what salary was annexed to it?

The *Secretary at War* answered, that no such office had been created, and the reason was, that this duty was performed by a gentleman who originally held another office, which was now abolished. He did not know what salary he had, but he supposed that he was paid in the same proportion with other officers of government.

Mr. *M. A. Taylor* said his reason for asking was, that he thought every unnecessary office ought to be abolished, and therefore he was extremely jealous of those who were recently created.

The *Secretary at War* hoped that the honourable gentleman would persevere in his search into the government offices, and he would be much obliged to him if he would point out any unnecessary.

Mr. *Grey* rose to correct what he had said respecting the time of bringing forward the army extraordinaries, he found that they were made out last year, the 25th of December, previous to the opening of the budget, and he gave notice, that after the House was resumed he would move for this account.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* professed to have no objection to its being made out.

Mr. *Sargent* moved—"that a sum not exceeding 1,900,024*l.* be granted to his majesty for defraying the expence of the ordnance service."

Mr. *Fox* understood that the motion went to furnish arms for the new cavalry raised by the late act of Parliament. He mentioned this, because he understood that, in every part of the country, there is so much difficulty in understanding and in executing the act, that a general hope was entertained, if it

it was not repealed, that, at least, it would not be proceeded upon.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that this was the first time that ever such a rumour had reached his ears. There were some trifling difficulties which might afterwards be removed by an explanatory act; but there was nothing, he was confident, in the act to obstruct the execution of a plan which must ultimately prove so advantageous to the country.

Mr. *Fox* was extremely happy to hear from the honourable Gentleman that an explanatory act was to be introduced, because it would give those gentlemen who disapproved of the former act, an opportunity of voting against it.

Mr. *M. A. Taylor* did not know where the Chancellor of the Exchequer had got his information; but he knew of several meetings that had been held in the country, where every gentleman put a different construction on the act; for his own part he considered it as quite impracticable to understand a single clause of it.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that after the honourable gentleman opposite had confessed his inability to understand the act, it would certainly be presumptuous in him or in any other person to attempt to explain it.

Mr. *M. A. Taylor* defied the Chancellor of the Exchequer, though he had prepared the Bill and carried it through the House, to construe a single clause of it.

The resolution was then put and carried.

Mr. *Sargent* then moved, "That a sum not exceeding 114,553*l.* be granted to his majesty for defraying the expenses of the ordnance land service for 1795, for which money had not been voted by parliament.—Granted.

"That a sum not exceeding 74,830*l.* be granted to his majesty for defraying the Ordnance sea service for 1795, for which money has not been voted by parliament."—Granted.

"That a sum not exceeding 425,336*l.* be granted to his majesty for defraying the sums laid out by the office of ordnance for 1796, and which have not been provided for by parliament."—Granted.

Lord *Arden* moved, "That a sum not exceeding 653,573*l.* be granted to his majesty for defraying the expence of half pay to the naval and marine officers."—Granted.

"That a sum not exceeding 768,100*l.* be granted to his majesty for repairing and rebuilding ships of war."—Granted.

Mr. *Rose* moved, "That a sum not exceeding 7000*l.* be granted to his majesty for defraying the expence of the civil establishment of the province of Canada."—Granted.

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The following are the precise sums voted ;

£70,000	o	o	for horse furniture and cloathing to augmentations.
7,500	o	o	for allowances to reduced American officers.
52,500	o	o	upon account of ditto.
4,500	o	o	for ditch roads.
125	3	4	for allowances to reduced horse guards.
118,874	16	1	for reduced officers or land forces and marines.
180,000	o	o	for increased rates of subsistence for quartering soldiers
136,675	o	o	for full pay to supernumerary officers.
1,000	o	o	for officers rate in the service of the states general.
136,779	17	1	for allowance to paymaster general, secretary at war, &c.
653,573	1	7	for ordinary of the navy.
762,100	o	o	for buildings and rebuildings of ships of war.
1,009,124	9	2	for ordnance land service not provided for in 1797.
114,553	19	9	for ordnance land service not provided for in 1795.
74,830	o	3	for ordnance sea service not provided for in 1795.
425,366	10	6	for ordnance land service not provided for in 1796.
7,000	o	o	for the civil establishment of the province of Upper Canada.
5,915	o	o	for the civil establishment of Nova Scotia.
4,550	o	o	for the civil establishment of New Brunswick.
1,900	o	o	for the civil establishment of the Island of St. John in America.
1,840	o	o	for the civil establishment of Cape Breton.
1,232	10	o	for the civil establishment of Newfoundland.
4,100	o	o	for the civil establishment of the Bahama Islands.
580	o	o	for the salary of the chief justice of Bermuda.
600	o	o	for the salary of the chief justice of Dominica.
5,523	10	o	for the civil establishment, &c. of New South Wales.

The House being resumed, the report of the committee was ordered to be received on Monday.

Mr. Grey moved That there be laid before the House an account of the extraordinaries of the army incurred and paid from the 20th of December, as far as they can be estimated. Ordered.

A person from the navy office brought to the bar an account of the navy, victualling, and transport bills, due from the 1st of January to the 31st of December 1796.

Adjourned till Monday.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, Dec. 5.

The Bill for removing the Lent Assizes from Thetford to Norwich, was read a first time. A petition was presented against the said Bill from the Mayor and Corporation of Thetford, which was ordered to lie upon the table, and the petitioners were ordered to be heard by themselves or their counsel, on the second reading of the Bill.

A petition was presented from the Freeholders of the county of Flint, complaining that Sir Thomas Mostyn, though a minor, and on that account ineligible to serve in Parliament,

Parliament, had been returned as their Representative ; and praying that the House would pass some censure on the conduct of Sir Edward Price, the returning officer, to whom the case had been represented, but who did not chuse to pay any attention to it.

The *Master of the Rolls* said, that as this was not a common petition; as the Member returned had not taken his seat; and probably would not till the subject of the petition was discussed; and as the county of Flint in consequence had no representative in parliament, that as early a day as possible would be appointed for taking it into consideration. He did not mean that it should take precedence of the petition upon the Southwark Election, but he hoped that it would have the priority of the petitions appointed to be heard after the Christmas recess.

After a little conversation the petition was ordered to be heard on Thursday the 2d. of March.

A petition was presented by Mr. *Williams* from the honourable T. Lloyd Kenyon, against the Election, which was ordered to be heard at the same time with the petition of the Freeholders.

A person from the Custom-house, and another from the Exchequer, brought papers to the bar from these two offices, which were brought up and ordered to lie upon the table for the use of the members of the House.

BREACH OF PRIVILEGE.

Sir *Edward Knatchbull* moved the order of the day for bringing Alexander Morris to the bar of the House.

Alexander Morris being brought to the bar in custody of the Serjeant at Arms, the *Speaker* asked him what was his name? The person in custody replied it was Alexander Morris. The *Speaker* informed him that he was brought to the bar in consequence of a Report from a Committee of the House of Commons, who were appointed to try the merits of a petition against the election for the Borough of Southwark, before whom he was summoned to attend to give evidence, a summons which he neglected to obey. The *Speaker* desired to know what he had to offer in his behalf?

Alexander Morris acknowledged having received the warrant, but he had some important private business which took him out of the way, and that he did not know that his disobedience would have given offence to the House. He hoped that the House, taking into consideration the cause of his absence, and his ignorance of its consequences, would be as lenient to him as possible.

The *Speaker* ordered the Serjeant at Arms to take him from the bar.

Sir *E. Knatchbull* said that the House were now in possession of the nature of the crime which Mr. Morris had committed, and of the apology he had to bring forward in his own exculpation. This was a case in which not only the rights of the petitioner against the Southwark Election were interested, but upon which depended the rights of substantial justice, and of every man in the House. It was, however, for the House to decide upon the extent of the offence, and the extent of the punishment proper to be inflicted upon it, and here he recommended lenity, as the side on which it would most become them to err. He was convinced for his own part, that Alexander Morris was not aware of the offence which he was committing in disobeying the warrant, at all events he thought it would be better to be too lenient than too severe. In the mean time he should move that Alexander Morris be remanded back to the custody of the Serjeant at Arms.

The *Speaker* suggested that it would be more regular for the House to express their disapprobation of the conduct of Alexander Morris before they decreed his punishment.

Sir *E. Knatchbull* then moved that it be resolved that Alexander Morris having disobeyed a warrant which he received from the Speaker of the House of Commons, to attend and give evidence before the said committee upon a petition against the Southwark Election, was guilty of a breach of the privileges of that House.

Mr. *Grey* supposed that no person could doubt of Alexander Morris having been guilty of a flagrant breach of privilege, and allowing that in general it was better to exercise lenity than severity, yet in the present case the nature of the apology when compared with the nature of the offence, was such that the House ought to proceed against Alexander Morris with considerable rigour. He had pleaded in excuse that he was called away by some private business of his own, but of this he had advanced no proof, and the House were left in possession of his bare assertion in extenuation of an offence of the most serious and important nature. But it was not the conduct of Mr. Morris alone which ought to be exposed to reprehension. The crime had been committed under very suspicious circumstances, and it would not be unworthy of the House of Commons to enter into a full investigation of the business, and to enquire whether or not the agents of Mr. Thellusson had not been tampering with Mr. Morris to prevent him from attending the committee.

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For his own part he was convinced that it might be brought home directly to Mr. Thelluffon's agents: he should therefore move, after this motion was disposed of, That Alexander Morris be brought to the bar and examined.

The original motion was put and carried.

Mr. *Fox* said, that before the punishment of the offence was adjudged by the House, it might be proper for them to enquire into the motives from which it was committed.

The *Speaker* informed the House that the ancient practice had been, when any person was taken into custody by the Serjeant at Arms, to decree the punishment for his offence, in consequence of which the Speaker issued his warrant to commit the offender to the custody of the Serjeant at Arms, to the Gate-house, or to Newgate. Of late, however, they had adopted a different procedure, by causing him to be brought to the bar of the House, (during which time, the Mace being off the table, no member was at liberty to ask any questions,) and heard in his own defence, after which the Speaker announced the judgment of the House. In the present instance, as he was not prepared to put those questions which might enter into the view of the honourable member (Mr. *Grey*,) he suggested that Alexander Morris should be called in, and that the mace should be suffered to remain on the table, in consequence of which, every member, through the medium of the Speaker, might put such questions as he thought fit.

Mr. *Grey* then moved, That Alexander Morris be brought to the bar and examined, the mace being on the table.

Alexander Morris being again brought to the bar by the Serjeant at Arms,

Mr. *Grey* proposed that the following question be put to him: "Did any person after you received the Speaker's warrant converse with you upon the subject of attending the committee of the House of Commons?"

Mr. *Anstruther* signifying across the table his disapprobation of the question,

The Serjeant was desired to take Alexander Morris from the bar; which being done,

Mr. *Anstruther* explained the grounds upon which he disapproved of the question. The House had already resolved that Alexander Morris had been guilty of a breach of privilege. The next thing for the House to determine was, the punishment which it would adjudge to the offence; and then, it would only remain that they should call in the prisoner and ask why the punishment ought not to be inflicted upon him? The mode of procedure by examination which the

honourable gentleman had proposed, would, in his opinion, defeat the ends of impartial justice; for, supposing him to answer his question in the affirmative, then the answer would throw the guilt of him upon another; and, if he answered in the negative, his answer might draw upon himself a severer punishment than that to which he would otherwise be subjected, which, in either case, was directly contrary to the ordinary course of judicial proceeding. At all events, it would be holding out a temptation to him to accuse others in order to lessen his own punishment. Before such a step was adopted, he hoped that, at least, some precedent would be produced to justify it.

The *Master of the Rolls* could not reconcile his mind to any examination of the prisoner at the bar. In his opinion he ought to be called upon to say what he had to bring forward in his exculpation. The House might or might not be satisfied with the defence; if he referred to any fact, they might require proof of that fact, and after hearing what he had to advance for himself, they ought to decide upon the punishment due to the offence.

Mr. *Anstruther* moved, That he be again brought to the bar of the House the next day

Mr. *Grey* professed to have no great objection to the motion, because, what had fallen from the honourable gentleman (Mr. *Anstruther*) had had considerable weight with him. At the same time he insisted, that the matter ought not to be lightly passed over, and that some investigation ought to be entered into, of a business in which the dignity of the House and rights of individuals were so deeply interested. He thought that it would be better to remand Alexander Morris to the custody of the Serjeant at Arms, to be again brought to the bar on Thursday next, on which day he should move, That Mr. Henry Speck and Captain Bartlett be also charged to attend.

Mr. *Grey's* motion was agreed to by the House, and in the mean time Alexander Morris was ordered to remain in the custody of the Serjeant at Arms, under the former warrant.

Mr. *Grey* said, that from the papers upon the table, they had only an account of the Navy Debt, for the year, to the 30th of September, and he wished to know if there was any mode of finding its amount up to the 30th of November.

Mr. *Rose* replied that it would be impossible to give an accurate account of the Navy Debt up to the 30th of November, because the statements were collected only twice a year from the different ports in the kingdom, and that this being
neither

neither of those stated periods, the account could not be called for; but he apprised the House that there would be laid upon the table the next day not a correct account, but a note from which they might be enabled to form a pretty correct estimate of the present Navy Debt.

Some explanatory conversation took place between Messrs. *Fox*, *Grey*, and *Rose* respecting the accounts upon the table. The Report of the Committee of Ways and Means was brought up; the resolutions were read and severally agreed to by the House.

Mr. *Fox* moved, That there be laid upon the table, an account of the navy bills paid from the 31st of December, 1795, to 30th November, 1796.—Ordered.

Likewise an account of the navy bills that have been paid, or that may fall due, from, the 30th of Nov. to the 31st of Dec. 1795.—Ordered.

General *Tarleton* moved, That the papers which he had formerly moved for, and which were upon the table, should be printed.—Ordered.

Mr. *Abbot* brought up the report of the committee appointed to consider of the best mode of promulgating the statutes.

The report was ordered to be printed.

The committees of Supply and of Ways and Means were deferred to Thursday.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, *December 6.*

Heard counsel in an appeal from the court of session in Scotland, in which Mr. John Denny, and others, were appellants, and the Marquis of Lorn, and others, respondents. The judgment was affirmed.

BRIGHT'S DIVORCE.

On the second reading of the Bill, counsel was heard, and the evidence examined; and the act of adultery being proved, the Bill was read a second time.

Received two Bill from the Commons.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, *December 6.*

Castleton and Spotland road bills were read a third time, and passed.

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Two accounts of foreign spirits were presented. Ordered to lie on the table, and to be printed.

The estimates of Chelsea hospital were presented. Ordered to lie on the table.

An account of discount on navy Bills was ordered.

The consideration of the Dutch property acts deferred till Friday.

Two members took the oaths, and their seats.

A petition for Minty's naturalization was presented, and Bill ordered.

Chaufert's, and Stainberg's naturalization, and Dudley canal Bills, were reported, and ordered to be ingrossed.

Vinet's naturalization Bill was read a second time, and committed.

Swayfield inclosure, Grantham canal, and jurisdiction Bills, were presented, and read.

The petition of Mr. Vassar, against the Malmesbury election, was presented and ordered to be considered the 17th of March.

Pool harbour, and Bristol roads petitions were presented, and referred to committees.

The call of the House was deferred until next Tuesday.
Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, *December 7.*

An account of the navy debt due, and to become due up to the 30th of December, was brought up, laid on the table and ordered to be printed.

BREACH OF PRIVILEGE.

Mr. Grey said, that upon reflection he had abandoned the idea of urging the examination of Alexander Morris now in custody for contempt of the House, and he thought it best to inflict some punishment upon the offence in the first place, after which, it was his intention to move for some enquiry who were the persons guilty of tampering with Morris, and if he succeeded in shewing that very improper practices had been employed upon the occasion, he conceived the House would not refuse an enquiry in which their own dignity was so much concerned.

Mr. Speaker said that it was not intended to call up Alexander Morris for examination, it would be unnecessary that he should again attend, as the House might proceed to consider

sider what punishment they would inflict. In this case the order for the attendance of Morris might be discharged.

Mr. *Grey* said that he then intended to move the next day first that some punishment should be inflicted upon Morris, and then that an enquiry should be instituted who were the persons who had been guilty of tampering with the offender upon this occasion.

A motion was then made, that the order be discharged.

Mr. *Anstruther* doubted whether Morris was a competent witness upon such an enquiry; he had no objection, however, that the order should be discharged.

The order was discharged.

Mr. *Rose* moved for a number of papers to be laid upon the table, indicating the objects of taxation for the year, viz.

An account of the net produce of the duties on auctions for the last four years.

An account of the produce of the old duty on bricks.

An account of the produce of the duty on coffee and coconuts.

An account of the produce of the old excise duty on tea.

An account of the produce of the duty on foreign and British spirits.

An account of the licences on the Scots distillery.

An account of the duty of a penny per mile on stage coaches.

An account of the produce of the assessed taxes, for the last three years.

The amount of the postage of letters for the last three years.

An account of the import of sugar from the British West India plantations; and also from the East Indies; and also an account of foreign sugars imported, distinguishing the quantities exported.

An account of bar iron, oil of olives, hemp and plantation slaves imported.

An account of the amount of pepper imported.

An account of the amount of the customs, excepting the articles of wine, sugar, bar iron, &c.

All these papers were brought in, and referred to the committee of ways and means.

Mr. *Rose* also brought in an account of the application of the disposable sum of two millions and a half granted to his Majesty for the service of the year 1796.

M. DE LA FAYETTE.

General *Fitzpatrick* gave notice, that on Thursday se'n- night he should renew a motion which he had made in the last parliament on the subject of the treatment of Monsieur la Fayette and his unfortunate companions in captivity. He should be extremely happy to receive intimation before that time of such steps having been taken as should preclude the necessity of a parliamentary interference, but if he received no such satisfactory information, he trusted that the present parliament would not do as the last parliament had done—give any sign of acquiescence in a proceeding, upon the ignominy and horror of which there was but one feeling throughout the whole of the civilized world.

MR. PITT AND LORD GRENVILLE'S BILLS.

Mr. *Fox* gave notice, that on the 13th of February next, that was to say, as soon after the proposed recess as he could expect a full meeting of the House, he should move for the repeal of the two Bills of the last Session of the last parliament; Bills which were too remarkable to be named more particularly; Bills which had produced so much sensation in the country, and so much serious alarm to every constitutional mind.

RELIEF OF THE POOR.

The *Chancellor* of the *Exchequer* gave notice, that he should bring in a bill before the recess for the better relief of the poor. Of this Bill he had given some intimation before. It was now his intention to bring it in only, that it might be printed before the recess, so as to enable Gentlemen to deliberate on its merits before it came to be discussed.

Mr. *Fox* desired to know what were his intentions with respect to the cavalry act?

The *Chancellor* of the *Exchequer* said, that he meant immediately to bring in a Bill to explain and amend that Act.

The *Secretary at War* brought in an account of the extraordinaries of the army, as far as the same could be made up to the 6th of December, and the account was ordered to be printed for the use of the members.

The order of the day was then read, and the House went into a committee of ways and means. *Mr. Hobart* in the chair.

BUDGET.

BUDGET.

The *Chancellor* of the *Exchequer* said, the subject which I have now to lay before you is so extensive to its details, and of importance so evident and so striking, that I shall best gratify my own feelings, as well as best discharge my duty by abstaining from all observations, which though collateral to the subject of the day, would serve only to extend the consideration, and by proceeding as expeditiously as possible to state distinctly and shortly, the resources which we may confidently rely on for the service of the year, and the amount of the expences which we may have to incur.

Before I proceed to that most important part of the task of this day, the opening to the committee a view of the general resources of the country, by which we may be able to provide for the necessary service of the year, and to shew them that however great the demand may be, we are fully equal to the emergency and prepared to meet it, it is my duty to state the amount of the supply, as it has been already voted, and that may be yet necessary to vote, for the service.

SUPPLY FOR THE YEAR 1797.

NAVY.

The committee will recollect that the vote for the Ordinary of the Navy was for 120,000 seamen and marines

Ordinary of the Navy was for 120,000 seamen and marines	£6,240,000
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To which add the amount of Extraordinaries	1,420,000
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Making together the sum of	7,660,000
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But that I may not leave any part of the service, much less this most valuable and favourite service short; and that our exertions may be carried to the utmost possible length I will take for the Navy the further sum of

2,500,000

Making altogether service of the Navy, for the year 1797, amount to

£10,160,000

ARMY.

The amount of the sums already voted for the Army is £6,613,000

The account of the Extraordinaries is not yet complete: but, as far as they can be made up with accuracy according to the account now presented, they appear to be of excess above the sum allowed last year

4,300,000

Total of the Army

10,913,000

The amount of the Ordnance

£1,623,000

The Miscellaneous services, including the sums given for the provision of the emigrant Priests, and under all the usual heads

378,000

Deficiency of Land and Malt

350,000

Sum for the diminution of the National Debt

200,000

VOL. I. 1796.

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Surplus

Surplus of grants in the year 1796, which ought to have come in aid of the service, amounting to 420,000 <i>l.</i> would enable him to take the deficiency of the taxes at so much less; he should only take the deficiency of Taxes at so much less; he should only take the deficiency of Taxes at	1,023,000
A Vote of Credit which he intended to move for and which he should afterwards explain, for	3,000,000
Making the total of the Supply for the year 1797	27,647,000

WAYS AND MEANS, 1797.

The first article of Ways and Means, was of course the Land and Malt	2,750,000
The growing produce of the Consolidated Fund, I shall take at a very small sum, the reasons of which I shall state afterwards	1,075,000
Surplus of Grants of the year 1796, and not applicable in the year 1796	420,000
Profit on the Lottery, after defraying the small sum which remains upon it, due to the loyalists, amounting to 80 or 100,000 <i>l.</i> I shall take at	200,000
The Loan, the circumstances of which I shall afterwards explain	18,000,000
Exchequer Bills, which I propose to issue in a new manner, and which I shall afterwards explain and prove to be both practicable and expedient	5,500,000
Total of Ways and Means	27,945,000

Consequently there is an excess of Ways and Means over the amount of the Supply of 298,000*l.* I have stated the extent of what will be necessary for the supply of the year, but in order to anticipate, as far as human foresight can provide for an expence so large, in circumstances so difficult, I shall endeavour to bring every thing before the committee. In the first place, I shall shortly state the terms of the loan, without comprehending all the singular combinations which have entered into this transaction, so creditable and glorious to the country. The new annual interest to be paid for the loan, as it stands at present, subject to a great reduction, if the funds should rise on the event of a safe and permanent peace, an event to which we have a right to look, and which this great display of national zeal and spirit is calculated to accelerate, yet I wish to view it as a permanent interest, and to consider it without the prospect of reduction. In that way the committee would see that the loan was made at the interest of only 5*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* *per cent.* and I should not think myself justifiable if I were to provide a less sum than for the whole as a permanent annuity. And also to add the usual sum of one *per cent.* to the sinking fund, as if the loan was not to be paid off. In this view, taking the interest at 5*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* and adding one *per cent.* on account of the sinking fund, the total interest on 18,000,000*l.* at 6*l.* 15*s.* *per cent.*

cent. would be 1,215,000*l.* I have proposed that we shall look to an issue of exchequer bills to the amount 5,500,000*l.* as a fair and a practicable means for the service of the year, and I do this because I am convinced that so many may be circulated both with economy and advantage. Other species of floating debt have been found to be extremely inconvenient and injurious, from the enormity of the discount to which they fell on account of the length of period they had to run. But exchequer bills were not subject to the same objection, though I should not even think it wise to issue them even for the period of a twelvemonth. I think that it is an available means for the public until the installments of the loan shall be made, to issue exchequer bills at short periods, say, at three months, which, bearing an interest of a fraction above five *per cent.* would be certain of never falling to a discount, because they would be receivable in payment of the instalments of the loan. The interest is as near as possible to five *per cent.* to accommodate it in the usual way to a certain sum *per diem.* I am confident that no inconvenience will be suffered from keeping afloat this amount of exchequer bills, but that on the contrary it will be attended with advantage and accommodation to the public. If, at the end of the year, it should be found adviseable to take them out of circulation, there will be no difficulty in the task. I propose to provide interest at five *per cent.* on the amount of these exchequer bills, which will be 275,000*l.*

It is my wish to look to every object for which we have to provide in the course of the year; with this view we must look to the amount of interest to be provided for the navy debt beyond the amount of the former votes.

The total excess of the Navy Debt beyond estimate of 1796, is	£3,250,000
Of this sum there was provided for	4,000,000

There remained therefore to be provided, interest for	4,250,000
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I shall by and by state the grounds of the computation that I made, and of the reasons why it has so far exceeded the estimate that I made, and I trust that I shall do it to your satisfaction. It ought to teach us to look forward to the probable addition that may be required for the service of the present year, and to provide largely against unforeseen circumstances. In this view, having already taken 2,500,000*l.* in the estimate of supply, I am confident that I shall cover every possible demand under the head of navy debt, if I provide interest for 3,000,000*l.* more.

There is only one other article to be added to the above, and which at the same time ought not to be taken into the estimate of the expence of the year. The committee will recollect that one of the taxes of the last session was in its passage through parliament found to be so complicated that it was expedient to give it up, "the tax on collateral succession." It was taken for the sum of 140,000*l*. and not having as it was my intention to do, provided another tax in its room, it is now my duty to make up for that deficiency; but of course this is not a sum to be taken as any part of the expence of the current year.

The total of the annuity to be raised by new burthens on the people for these distinct heads therefore is	£2,222,000
But from this amount I have to deduct the sum which the East India Company have engaged to pay, namely, interest on 2,000,000 <i>l</i> . of the above loan for four years, I have to deduct therefore	112,000
Making the sum to be raised by annual taxes	2,110,000

I should not think that I had attained my object by the engagement of the India Company to advance this for four years, though undoubtedly it is a very handsome sum, if afterwards it was to be left afloat, and might come to be provided for at that period. But I have recent information that is to be recommended to the Court of Directors, and by them to the General Court that the company shall undertake to pay this sum annually during the remainder of their existing charter. They certainly cannot undertake more liberally, and it is a handsome and becoming return on their part for the protection whic they received from the country in the moment of their pressure, that they thus come forward to contribute so liberally to the public service.

NEW TAXES.

My next duty is to enumerate the particulars of the taxes by which it is proposed to defray the heavy burthen which it becomes necessary to impose, in order to meet the exigency of our situation. This is a painful, but at the same time an indispensable part of my duty, and I trust that we shall not shrink from performing this duty in its full extent, from any inconvenience which it may present to our constituents, far less to ourselves; that we shall not fail to give a pledge to Europe that we have both spirit and resources to look our situation in the face, and to provide for every emergency which may arise in the present contest. While I talk thus, it is not because I feel the hardship on others to be small; on myself most assuredly I feel it to be great. Every additi-
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onal burden which it is necessary to impose upon the country is undoubtedly a new subject of regret. At the same time however it is with peculiar satisfaction I reflect, that the period at which I am speaking is pregnant with a thousand circumstances, which at once proclaim the inexhaustible resources, and the unconquered spirit of the British nation. At such a period I may confidently come forward without disguising the burdens which the exigency of the crisis requires, and at the same time without affecting to treat them as light—Light indeed they cannot be considered, except they be so represented in comparison with the immense importance of the objects of the contest—and in comparison with those unnatural and violent means which have been employed by the enemy, and have almost exhausted their resources. I should not do my duty if I did not propose such objects of taxation as may appear sufficient to meet the scale of expediture for which it becomes necessary to provide. At the same time I am well aware that these objects will admit of much discussion, and that they cannot be fully considered, or fairly examined, in the first instance. Their particular consideration must consequently be the subject of future debate. I have therefore to deprecate all hasty objections, and to solicit from the candour of gentlemen, that they will, at least, forbear to cavil at any object of taxation which I may propose, unless they are confident that they are acquainted with and can propose a better substitute. Where taxes are to be raised to so considerable an amount, as in the present instance, it is impossible to provide adequate means which will not be liable to much objection. But though it will be impossible to avoid particular objections it seems upon the whole to be the most fair and unexceptionable principle of taxation, that the more generally the burdens are diffused, the more likely will they be to be equal. If we have seen the revenue of this country, even under circumstances the most unfavourable, so rapidly accumulated and drawn from such various channels, we may surely look with confidence to the capability of the country to bear those further burdens which will be required in the present moment. It has shewn a degree of energy, even more than sufficient to encounter all the difficulties of the crisis. If, after all the distresses of the last war, the burdens of which were at the time so severely felt; and which seemed almost to have exhausted the resources of the country, the revival of the revenue in the first years of peace was so rapid? If within a few years it had attained a state so flourishing;

flourishing, and if we, from the unfortunate experience of some years of war have been enabled to ascertain that it has now arrived at that degree of solidity and permanency, so as to leave the old sources of the national income untouched, and even shew itself equal to produce new, certainly we may look forward with confidence to prosperity beyond all estimate on the restoration of the blessings of peace. In the mean time the most equal principle of taxation will be to render the objects as diffuse as possible, and with this view I propose to select a few of the different branches of the existing revenue which seem best calculated for the purpose, in order to provide the additional taxes necessary for the service of the year.

TAXES OF EXCISE.

TEA

The first branch of the revenue which I mean to propose to your attention is undoubtedly one of the most important, and which has appeared to me particularly eligible as a source of supply on the present occasion. I allude to that branch of revenue which has arisen from the excise. The taxes drawn from this quarter have in every instance been so successful at to give us confidence with respect to any new experiments which we may be induced to make. The first object which I mean to suggest is one which at different times has occupied the attention of the House, and occasioned considerable discussion. I mean the article of tea. Notwithstanding the additional duty lately imposed on this article, the sales of last year at the India house have considerably exceeded those of any former year, both in respect of quantity and of quality and value. It is evident that the consumption is greatly increased, and is now universally prevalent. This circumstance pointed out the propriety of a small additional tax. From the extensive consumption of the article, the tax must be immensely diffused, and therefore can only be felt in a trifling degree by any individual. Small, however, as that proportion might be, it is still my intention that this tax shall in no degree be allowed to bear hard on the lower classes of the community. I mean, therefore, to exempt from the operation of this tax, the whole of that coarser sort of tea, which, I understand, to be the common beverage of the poorer classes, and which at the India sales, does not exceed two shillings *per* pound in price. It may be urged that any additional tax on tea will have the effect to encourage smuggling. At the same time it may be remarked that the

the coarse species of tea, which is expressly exempted from the operation of the tax, is the most easily smuggled, the least liable to be damaged, and also the most likely to be an object of consumption among the lower classes, who inhabit the coast. This additional tax, I propose to rate at 10 per cent. on the value of the article, and if we attend to the circumstances of the additional importation and the great increase of the sales, we may reasonably expect that this tax will be amply productive. I am aware that at former periods it has been found expedient to adopt measures of an entirely different tendency, which at the same time undoubtedly were highly beneficial. But, though we owe the benefit of the suppression of illicit trade to the low price to which tea was reduced by former proceedings of the legislature, it by no means follows that it is still necessary to continue the same policy. There is not the same danger to be apprehended from the attempts of smugglers after their capital has been withdrawn, their habits broken, and such regulations adopted, as must operate as an effectual bar to their future practices. If the return of peace tend to diminish the risk of smugglers, at the same time it will so reduce the charges of the India company as will enable them to lower their prices. Taking the additional duty on tea at the rate of 10 per cent. on the average of the sales of three years, it would amount to 240,000*l*.

AUCTIONEERS.

An additional duty on sales by auction of two pence half halpenny in the pound on sales of estates, and three pence on all sales of furniture, goods and merchandize, will produce 40,000*l*.

BRICKS.

An additional duty of 1*s*. *per* 1000 on all bricks made in Great Britain, I estimate at 36,000*l*.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN SPIRITS.

There is another article, which I have to submit to the committee which suggests nearly the same considerations as the additional duty on tea. One considerable duty has already been gained on this article, and the consumption is so pernicious, that with respect to this article no man could wish that there should be any limits to the duty, so far as are consistent with the means of safely collecting it. So long as the consumption continues to a considerable extent, an addition to the duty must be considered as highly eligible in every view
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of policy and morals. I propose to raise the duty on spirits in the same proportion as before, viz, one penny on every gallon of wash, amounting to five pence on every gallon of British spirits. The duty on foreign spirits will be advanced in the same proportion. The total amount on British and foreign spirits I estimate at the sum of 210,000l.

SCOTS DISTILLERY.

Another circumstance I have to mention, must be satisfactory, so far as it presents a new and eligible mode of supply, and yet must occasion no small degree of astonishment in the committee—the circumstance to which I allude respects the state of the distilleries in Scotland. The mode of collecting the duty on spirits in that quarter has been by a duty on the contents of the still. The sum raised in this way, in the first instance, was so inconsiderable as not to deserve to be mentioned. By the last regulation it amounted to eighteen pounds, and had altogether produced a sum of one hundred thousand pounds. On calculating the amount of the quantity of spirits distilled in that country, still the duty was found very inadequate to that which subsisted on the same quantity in England. The disproportion is so very great, it ought not to be suffered to continue. I have had representations from the most respectable people in Scotland, suggesting, that either with a view to the morals of the people, or on fair grounds of policy, the present was a most eligible object of revenue. While a duty of eighteen pounds has been charged on a still through the rest of Scotland, only a sum of two pounds ten shillings has been charged on the same contents in the Highlands. The propriety of this exemption has been urged from various local considerations—the nature of the soil, the grain produced, &c. It may be proper to discuss, whether this exemption should be allowed to continue in its full extent? and whether the reasons, which have formerly been urged, ought to be allowed the same weight in the present moment? The smallest sum, however, which I propose is triple the present duty of 18l. on the licence. Notwithstanding this increase, the duty will not be equal to the proportion of duties in England. The sum arising from this increased duty on the stills I estimate at 300,000l. Even if the effect should be to lessen the consumption of spirits, still the revenue will not suffer in any material degree. This diminution would occasion a greater consumption of malt liquor, and in this way would equally contribute to promote the interests of the revenue, while it would

would have a much more beneficial tendency with respect to the health and morals of the people.

CUSTOMS.

SUGAR.

The next tax I mention with regret, because it will fall in some degree on the lower classes of the people, though it is one which, on the whole, seems to be a proper object of taxation. I mean an additional tax of 2s. 6d. on every hundred weight of sugar. This I calculate will amount to the sum of 280,000l.

BRIMSTONE, BAR IRON, OIL OF OLIVES, STAVES.

On these articles of the customs, I propose to lay an addition of ten *per cent.* amounting to 43,000l. and on all other customs, wine, coals, and prize goods excepted, a new duty of five *per cent.* amounting to 110,000l.

The whole of these duties from the customs will amount to 466,000l.

ASSESED TAXES.

The next article I mean to propose is an additional duty upon the assessed taxes, consisting of two sorts—one on horses, amounting to 11,000l.; 10 *per cent.* on the commutation duty, producing 55,000l.; and an additional duty of 20 *per cent.* upon the additional horse duty and on dogs; the amount of this duty will be 62,000l. There is another article of the assessed taxes; viz.

THE HOUSE TAX.

The committee will recollect, a noble lord had imposed a duty on houses, taking the number of windows and the rent as a criterion of the sum to be paid. This last seemed to be a tolerable fair criterion of the different proportions which ought to be contributed by each individual, as it might in general be supposed that the rent and size of the house were regulated by the means and subsistence of the occupier. This however was in many cases found to be a fallacious conclusion. In some instances in the country the extent of a house was found to be a disadvantage. The possession of an old large mansion house, where it was accompanied with a small fortune, so far from subjecting the proprietor to additional taxes, ought rather to operate as an exemption. The value of houses of the same size was to be estimated not so much according to their extent, as according to other circumstances with which they were connected, such as the number of servants kept, and the amount

of other assessed taxes charged on the occupier. The most equitable mode, therefore, seemed to be to levy a tax in proportion to the other assessed taxes, as these might be supposed to bear a more certain proportion to the fortunes of the individuals. The number of servants for instance kept in a house, will in general correspond with the fortunes of the inhabitants. The sum arising from a tax levied in this way, I calculate will amount to 150,000*l.* and this with an addition to the assessed taxes, I take at 290,000*l.* Add to these a small regulation in certain stamp duties amounting to 30,000*l.*

POSTAGE.

The conveyance of articles, which from the present advanced state of society, is put on so much a better footing, seems to present a fair object of taxation. It is, undoubtedly, but just that those articles should be made to contribute to the public service in return for that convenience and protection which they derive from the public. Letters in a particular manner come under this description. The increased facility with which they are transmitted to a distance, and the great convenience afforded to correspondence in consequence of recent improvements, may fairly allow that something should be added to the present rate of postage. The present rate of charging letters is first for one, two, or three stages; it then goes on to eighty miles, and from that to one hundred and fifty. This mode of charging by stages is very unequal, as one stage consists of more miles than another. Therefore, though I do not wish that persons living at a distance should be burthened on that account, yet as their convenience is so much consulted, I think they may bear some increase of duty to the rate of postage, and for this reason, I am of opinion, that it will be a more equitable mode to charge by miles than by stages; I also propose to adopt a new regulation with respect to gradations, and with respect to the bye and cross roads, inland letters, and letters from Scotland. These regulations, with an additional penny to be paid on each letter, will, according to the best calculation, amounts to about the sum of 250,000*l.*

STAGE COACHES.

An additional duty on stage coaches which are already exempt from other duties will produce 60,000*l.*

PARCELS.

The conveyance of parcels by stage coaches and other ways is also a fair object of taxation. I propose to subject them to a small stamp duty on booking them, which will
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afford additional security to the conveyance, and I estimate will produce 60,000*l*.

CANAL NAVIGATION.

The only other tax which I have to propose is on a species of conveyance, which has also been much indebted to recent improvements; the conveyance by inland navigation. This accommodation to the trade and industry of the country, has owed much to the protection and patronage of the legislature. To it the proprietors have been indebted for the permission to employ their capital in a way so beneficial to themselves and the public. It is therefore but fair that while the extent of their improvements discovers their increasing opulence, the legislature should apply to this source or prosperity for assistance to the exigencies of the state. It is proposed to make a small addition to the tolls already charged on that navigation amounting to about one eighth. If an addition had been made to the tax on insurance against fire and water, and had been found fully to answer, surely those individuals who derived so much accommodation as well as a considerable saving from this new mode of conveyance, might in return for the benefit they experienced be called upon to contribute a small proportion to the exigencies of the state. As this eighth would be charged only on the existing tolls, all the exemptions which were now allowed, would still be permitted to hold good. The following is a

RECAPITULATION OF THE TAXES,

EXCISE.

10 per cent. on Teas	£ 240,000
10 per cent. on coffee, &c.	30,000
Auctions	40,000
Bricks	36,000
Spirits	210,000
Licences on Scots Distillery	300,000
Total of Excise Duties	£.856,000

CUSTOMS.

Sugar	280,000
Pepper	10,000
10 per cent. on Brimstone, Iron, Olive Oil and Staves	43,000
5 per cent. on all other customs, Prize Goods, Coals and Wine excepted	110,000
Other articles on import, such as Starch, Bricks, &c.	23,000
Total of Customs	466,000
Assessed taxes, and new house tax	290,000
Regulation of Stamps	30,000
M m	Postage

Postage and regulation of Post Office	250,000
Stage Coaches	60,000
Stamp on parcels	60,000
Canal navigation	120,000
Total amount of new taxes	2,132,000
Amount of the annuity to be raised	2,110,000

Excess of taxes 22,000

Such are the sources from which I propose to draw the necessary sums to provide for the interest of the enormous expence of the year. I am not insensible that in several of these taxes I may have made an erroneous calculation, and have extended the estimate of the produce beyond what it may ultimately turn out to be; in this, however, I trust the committee will believe that I have been guided by the strictest regard to truth, and have taken the best criterion that was in my power, experience, for my guide. In those taxes which I could subject to that test, I have confidence in the accuracy of my statement; in those which are untried I have at least been moderate. I am happy to say that in looking at the resources of the country, we have a right to have confidence in the full production of these duties. They are diffused over so many articles, that they will operate with equality, and yet will not bear hard on the classes of the poor. If we look at the production of the permanent taxes, we shall have no reason to believe that the war has materially injured the sources of our prosperity.

The permanent revenue for the year ending 10th October, 1796, amounted to	14,012,000
And notwithstanding the operation of the new duties and the influence of a state of war, the average produce of those duties for the last three years was	13,855,000

On the side of supply, I have taken but the sum of 3,000,000*l.* to meet the further extraordinaries for the year 1797, though the extraordinaries for the last year amounted to a much larger sum. There are two grounds for my not thinking it necessary to make a larger provision; there were many articles of charge in 1796, which will not recur in 1797. And secondly, there were several sums advanced which are likely to be repaid, and upon which we have a right to calculate. For instance, in the advance of 1796, made by commissioners upon oath to the merchants of Grenada, there is the sum of 900,000*l.* which we have a right to believe was advanced upon good security, and which will, no doubt, be speedily available to the public.

Another

Another expence of a particular nature has been incurred in the interval of parliament. I allude to assistance which has been granted to the Emperor, in order to enable him to carry on his military operations. That the expence of the country has been swelled by exertions which have been so gallantly supported, and have terminated so beneficially to the common cause, I think no man will regret. I am persuaded no man will be of opinion that we ought to have withheld from a brave and faithful Ally the assistance necessary to preserve his independence, and to restore him to glory. That assistance ministers thought proper to grant, not ignorant of the responsibility which they thereby incurred, not forgetting their own duty, nor fearful of the event. They reflected that in the critical situation of the country it might have been matter of extreme delicacy to have brought forward a public discussion on the propriety of advancing a sum to a foreign court; they were aware of the alarm which might have been excited by any proposition to send a quantity of specie out of the country. It is well known that a generally received opinion of the mischief that may be attendant on a measure is often productive of the reality. The consequence of discussion might have been to have suggested the grant of a sum too small for the wants of our Ally, or too large for the means of the country. On that account ministers declined taking the opinion of parliament. They did not so far yield to their desire of aiding the Emperor, as to step beyond the bounds of prudence, nor did they so tamely shrink from their own responsibility as to withhold that assistance which they deemed essentially important. A sum of about twelve hundred thousand pounds has, I believe, been allotted to his Imperial Majesty. A future opportunity will be afforded for the discussion of this particular topic, which it was not otherwise necessary for me to mention in the present instance, than because I was anxious that no circumstance connected with the national expenditure should be kept back on this occasion. I am convinced, that, to have withheld the assistance which has been granted, would have been to have sacrificed the best hope of this country for bringing the contest to a fortunate issue. It is my intention, if this conduct is found to merit your approbation, humbly and earnestly to claim and solicit your confidence in continuing the same system. I cannot for the reasons I have already mentioned, propose to you any specific sum to be granted to his Imperial Majesty. But, if you think proper to repose in ministers the same confidence in granting such occasional aid as they may see to be necessary,

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it shall, on their part, be exercised with the same caution. I have therefore proposed a sum of three millions, chiefly with a view of enabling ministers to make advances to our Allies; if we shall be compelled to persevere in the war. At the same time, we are not to consider such sums as lost to the country. We have seen too many of those qualities, the inherent companions of good faith and honour, displayed in the recent exertions of his Imperial Majesty to entertain any suspicion with respect to his conduct. And we may confidently hope for the happiest result in the present contest from his courage and perseverance, fed by our resources and supported by our constancy. On this ground I proposed the vote of three millions. I shall add nothing further on the subject of army extraordinaries.

On the subject of navy debt, it was my desire and expectation, that a full and perfect account should have been laid upon the table, so as to have given to the committee a distinct idea of the whole amount for the year. I find, however, that the account has not been presented entire. I am able to state roundly what it is expected to amount to, from the progress that has been already made, and as it is laid before the House:—

The net amount of the Navy Debt up to the 30th November appears to be	£15,171,000
To which add, as the probable sum to the 31st December, 1796	1,000,000
Add to this, the sum of Navy Debt first funded	4,414,000
And the amount of the Navy Debt on the 31st December, 1796, will be in all	20,585,000
On the 31st December, 1795, it amounted to	12,362,000
So that the debt incurred in 1796 is	8,223,000
I foresaw and provided for	4,000,000
It therefore exceeded my estimate by	£4,223,000

And it is my duty to explain how this excess has happened; not that I mean to shelter myself from the imputation of error, so difficult to avoid in a calculation so extremely large; but to shew, as far as it is in my power, that it arose from circumstances which I could neither foresee nor prevent. The explanation will perhaps serve to convince the committee that we may look with perfect reliance to a diminution of these expences for the current year.

In the first place, the expence of transports exceeded the sums which I had imagined, and which on the most mature calculations, made by persons of the greatest experience, I presented to parliament, by no less a sum than 1,300,000l.

This

This arose from a variety of circumstances which no human foresight could anticipate, and which, though the most to be regretted, are the easiest to be excused. By the unfortunate vicissitudes of weather, by the delays and disasters which unfortunately happened to our expeditions; by the quantity of transports that were necessary to be taken up in consequence of these things, and by the new regulations of this board not being brought into perfect activity.

Another head of expence which has occurred, and which it was impossible to foresee, was the sum incurred for foreign transports, in order to bring home stores and provisions, which might otherwise have fallen into the hands of the enemy; for the high demurrage which we have been obliged to pay, and to which our Courts of Admiralty, however reluctantly, have found it just and equitable to submit. By these causes the expence of foreign transports, demurrage, &c. has amounted to 900,000*l*.

Another head of unforeseen expence was the unprecedented discount to which the navy bills fell, and which operated so injuriously upon commerce and on publick circulation. On this head of discount there has been paid no less than the sum of 600,000*l*. Thus, therefore, the committee will see that in three articles only which it was impossible to anticipate, there has been expended near 3,000,000*l*. and when they take into their further consideration the circumstance of our having a new maritime enemy to encounter, and also a threatened invasion to repel, for which measures of precaution have been taken, it will not be thought that the sum of 4,200,000*l*. above my calculation is a very remarkable error. The practical use that we must draw however from the fact certainly is, not to avoid all estimates, but to make out estimates with as much correctness as possible, and at the same time to claim a large, though discreet indulgence, for unforeseen circumstances; and in the statement of the supply I think I have made ample provision for the naval exertions of the year, even if the pertinacity of the enemy should oblige us to continue those exertions through the whole of the year. The committee will recollect that there has been already voted—

Under the head of Navy	—	—	7,660,000
To which I added the further sum of	—	—	2,500,000
Making together the sum of	—	—	10,160,000
And to this I now add, for which I have also made provision, the probable sum of	—	—	3,000,000
Total of the Navy for the year 1797,	—	—	13,160,000
			Which

Which the committee will see, if they deduct the sums that have been paid under the head of transports, foreign freights for the bringing home of flour, &c. together with demurrage, and the amount of discounts on the navy bills, all articles which are not likely to recur, is fully equal to the expenditure of the last year, which, with all these unforeseen accidents was 15,212,000*l*.

In stating these estimates I have endeavoured to bring forward to the view of the committee all the information which they can possibly desire on the subject. I have stated in its utmost extent the scale of expenditure which it may be necessary to incur, if we shall still be called to persevere in a contest connected with our honour, our happiness, our independence and safety. I trust that I have said enough on this topic, and that if the alternative should be presented, the British nation will need no incentive to support such a contest with vigour and perseverance, rather than submit to protracted misery, evaded mischief, and certain disgrace. Such, undoubtedly, will be their conduct, if they wish to maintain the character which they inherit from their ancestors, or to transmit the privileges they enjoy undiminished to their posterity. In this period of the war (God grant that it may be short!) it is still matter of much congratulation, under all we have suffered, under all the accumulated difficulties arising from a contest as unexampled in its exertions, as transcendently importante in its objects, and notwithstanding the violent and unnatural means employed by the enemy, that by opposing to them the constant fruits of regular industry, protected by a system of civil order, we have been able to meet the exigency of the crisis, and to provide ample resources for every branch of the publick service. If after four years of war, not only the permanent revenue is not affected, but even the new taxes are found to be fully productive, if the state of internal industry and domestick improvement exhibit a picture of prosperity, which would amaze incredulity, if it did not address itself to observation, we have surely much ground of satisfaction. I have formerly had occasion to describe the highly flourishing situation of our commerce, which even under circumstances the most unfavourable has increased with astonishing and unexampled rapidity. It is with infinite pleasure I am enabled to state that the receipts of the last quarter fully confirm the symptoms of our growing prosperity, and if those of the other quarters encrease in the same proportion, the whole exports of the year will amount to

to thirty millions. This flourishing state of our affairs ought not to lessen our moderation, or abate our desire for peace. But that peace is not worthy of the name which is not calculated to afford internal and external security, to preserve to us the blessings of our constitution, to protect the operations of our industry, and to maintain the dignity of the British character among foreign nations. It is the restoration of such a peace which alone is truly desirable, and in seeking which we ought to be careful not to mistake the phantom for the reality. I beg pardon for not being able to withhold the expression of my feelings on this subject. They are feelings which want not to be enforced by words. They are the feelings of the British nation spoken by substantial acts, evinced by the most unequivocal displays of zeal, the most liberal testimonies of support to the publick cause, and supported by powerful and ample resources. It is my most fervent wish that the spirit of Britain may be an example to other countries, that her resources may ever keep pace with her zeal, and her perseverance be crowned with most distinguished success. I therefore move you, Sir, that towards raising the supply granted to his majesty the sum of 18,000,000*l.* be raised by annuities.

Mr. Grey said, that at the time when the enormous burdens, with which the country was already loaded, required the utmost vigilance and caution which the representatives of the people could exercise, and when so great an additional weight was to be imposed, he hoped the House would recollect the important duties which their situation, as guardians of the publick purse, called upon them to discharge, and induce a minute examination of the unexampled expence which had distinguished a war the most disastrous in which this country had ever been engaged, a war which he had ever thought was equally detestable in its principles, as it is threatened to be dangerous in its consequences. Much as he had admired the eloquence with which the right honourable gentleman had adorned the false and deceitful statements he had made, he should be sorry if it could so far blind the House to the duty they owed their constituents, as to induce them to lay on the burdens that were proposed without enquiring how the expence was incurred, and adopting measures by which the extravagance which prevailed in the publick expenditure might in future be checked. That night the honourable gentleman had introduced topics somewhat different from those upon which

he had usually insisted. He had thought proper to adopt as the criterion of national prosperity, an account of the exports and imports, and upon this proof he had rested the triumphant conclusions he had deduced. Last year this standard had never been mentioned; it was the facility of raising money, it was the low rate of interest, upon which a loan could be negotiated, upon which the honourable gentleman had placed the proofs of the flourishing state of our finances, and the undiminished vigour of our resources. He had not said a word of the plenty of money, or of the low rate of interest. Indeed with what propriety, with what decency could he have held that language, when the House would recollect that the Chancellor of the Exchequer actually had it in contemplation to adopt that expedient, against which he had so often declaimed with so much vehemence—that a *forced loan* was in agitation, and that this threat was actually contained in a letter from the honourable gentleman to the governor of the bank, in order to accelerate the raising of the supplies for the present year; but it was from a comparison of the imports and exports that our prosperity was to be determined. He had occasion, however, to examine the account alluded to, and he had been told in that House, that the exports and imports did by no means ascertain the real state of our commerce, or support the conclusion of our prosperity. The very account itself must shew that any inference founded upon it is erroneous. Thirty millions appeared to be the amount of our exports, of which one-fifth was coffee. This was the important document then upon which they were to be amused, with the lofty statement of our increasing wealth and unimpaired resources. While six millions were stated as the amount of the export of coffee, only two or three years were stated as the amount of the imports; and yet, upon such a paper as this, was the true situation of the country to be ascertained? The honourable gentleman had professed a sincere desire of stating every article of the publick expence, that as far as possible he might meet it with a suitable provision. This was the language which the honourable gentleman had employed in bringing forward every budget, and this profession of sincerity in the design had generally been accompanied with a failure in the execution. Last year the same desire of stating every expence, and covering it with a proper provision, had been professed, and what was the result? The navy debt might stand for an example. He professed to bring every thing forward,

forward, he had examined every article of the navy debt, this article had gone beyond his expectations, and the other would not again occur and his conclusion was, that a saving this year would in all probability ensue. In December then a sum of 1,500,000*l.* was provided; instead, however, of this provision being found adequate, after having persuaded the House to refuse every enquiry that was proposed, and to resign every power of controul with which it was invested, the honourable gentleman again came forward in April, when he had obtained more complete means of ascertaining what the publick exigences would demand, and after more than three months of the year had elapsed, and declared that four millions would be necessary. Upon this occasion he had again urged the necessity of providing for the supplies, by fairly stating the probable amount, and again it appeared that so far from the statement being correct, it did not amount to one half of the real extent of the navy debt. Upon the present occasion, the honourable gentleman had taken to pieces a variety of the articles of the account, repeating the same comments which he had used, stating that many of them would not occur next year, that many of them arose from temporary causes, and in spite of the fallacy with which in former instances this reasoning had been attended, in defiance of the experience of what had so frequently happened, he again estimated the amount of this service at three millions below the sum to which last year it had amounted. The honourable gentleman said, that he must here act upon his opinion, and doubtless in such cases this must to a certain degree be a rule; but when it was found every year that the amount of the sum calculated was encreased, it was natural that experience should have pointed out a different mode of proceeding, and induced the honourable gentleman to come forward and state as an expence which it was not difficult to see, and which it was proper to provide for. Notwithstanding all the reasonings he had employed, and all the probabilities of diminution he had urged, the navy debt had exceeded his statements; he should therefore have concluded, that if some articles which had not been expected had occurred this year, and were not again to be expected, there might others be found which likewise had not been foreseen. Every war had displayed the danger and the falsehood of such calculations, confirmed by what the honourable gentleman's own experience suggested; it was his duty, therefore, to have observed the constitutional mode of making provision for every expence which was likely to

occur, a mode which at once secured the interest of the public, and maintained the proper functions of the House of Commons. The sum required for the service of the present year was 27,640,000*l*. Here however, he must complain of the practice of bringing forward the ways and means before the House could be acquainted with the amount of the expences of the preceding year. Such a practice was highly unconstitutional, for it prevented the House from exercising its powers of controul, and enforcing that economy which it was bound to exert. Upon the sixteen millions which were to be borrowed, there would be a discount for prompt payment of 200,000*l*. which had not been taken notice of. (Mr. Pitt observed, that it was not usually put in.) Mr. Grey continued, that this was not of any importance to the general argument he supported. He maintained that every thing of which any estimate that could be formed, ought to be included in the statements of the expence of the year, and properly provided for. There were a few observations which he had also to make upon the amount of the taxes imposed, and their fitness to meet the public exigencies. It was his opinion, that the taxes laid on since the war were inadequate to the debt that had been funded, and upon a comparison of the different sums borrowed, with the sums of the taxes provided for the payment of the interest, a deficiency appeared upon the whole of 372,000*l*. This would evidently appear upon a comparison of the different sums of interest which had been stated each year since the war, with the produce of the taxes which had been imposed for the payment.

In 1793 the sum to be raised was	252,812 <i>l</i> . produce	145,682
1794	773,324 .	723,324
1795	1,227,115	1,255,592
1796	1,834,354	1,615,228

In which statement it was to be observed, that in the produce of the year 1795 was deducted 200,000*l*. stock in hand of the wine duty, and 43,000*l*. from the regulation of fraking, but upon the whole there was the deficiency of 372,000*l*. Allowing, however, for what had been diverted to the payment on account of the Spanish armament, there would remain the permanent deficiency of 372,000*l*. which he had stated. If then it was considered that the wine tax would not be so productive in future as it had been in 1796, because the produce of the stock in hand was to be deducted, as no provision was made for the 315,000*l*. interest of the old navy debt, and as interest was to be provided for those funded in October, it would be necessary to provide for these before honour-

honourable gentleman could say that the publick expences were fairly covered. The honourable gentleman had provided funds to the amount of 1,100,000*l.* but if all the articles unprovided were taken into view, the amount of the old navy debt, the deficiencies of the funds already allotted, the funds provided ought to have amounted to near three millions, at least there would be a deficit of more than 800,000*l.* These points at present he only took in a general view, ; at some future period, as soon as possible after Christmas, he intended to bring forward the subject for minute examination. Upon a more extensive investigation of the subject it would be found, that great and pressing as the burdens about to be imposed were, there was still a million of fresh taxes to be found. That so much of the expenditure consisted of sums over which parliament had exercised no controul, was a point of serious importance, and demanded particular discussion. If they retained any regard for the functions with which they were invested, and that œconomy which the situation of affairs so much required, the House would consider the subject with serious attention, and adopt some plan to check the extravagance which was practised, and that neglect of their controul which marked the publick expenditure.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that though he chiefly considered the observations of the honourable gentleman as intended to convey a notice of a future discussion of the subject, he could not allow them to pass altogether without remark. He was ready to admit that the exports and imports were not very correct, and he never meant to argue from them as by themselves supporting a precise conclusion with regard to the state of our commerce. They were, however, as correct now as they were on former occasions, and by a comparison of them with what former statements of the kind afforded, it appeared that the excess of the exports over the imports was as great as in time of peace. It was not a new topic which he had introduced on the present occasion. Year after year he had been told that the the exports and imports were fallacious, and in reality, he had never founded any inference upon them absolutely, but merely obtained a conclusion by a comparison with other years, conceiving it fair to suppose that the same degree of incorrectness prevailed at one time as at another. He was glad that the honourable gentleman had reminded him of the loan. It might have been imagined indeed, that he had omitted saying any thing of the terms on which it was concluded, because, if there ever was a loan which required nothing to be said in its defence,

fence, it was the present. In truth he had intended to have said a few words upon the subject, but in the multiplicity of the details he had to go through, it had escaped him. If the honourable gentleman, however, compared the state of the three *per cents.* when he considered the rapidity with which the subscription had been filled up, the rate of interest that was to be given, and the sum of capital to be created, had he attended to the effects of the sinking fund, and that in six years in a given circumstance, the rate of interest in the five *per cents.* might be reduced to four *per cent.* he would not find that the terms of the bargain required any apology or defence. He would find that the publick had saved no less than sixteen *per cent.* at present, and in a particular event not less than fifty *per cent.* If the honourable gentleman would compare the four last years of the last war with our present situation after four years of war, he would find only one loan, in which the actual interest was so low, and this at a period when the general funds were somewhat higher, and when the interest of the particular fund was not reducible, as in the present case. He was surprised to hear the objection to the discount, for it had been made for the first time in a case in which it could not at all apply. If there was no necessity for the issuing of Exchequer Bills by the quantity of money received upon the loan in prompt, the interest which must have been allowed upon the former would have been saved, so that in this view the advantage would be considerable. It was stated by the honourable gentleman, that the taxes imposed since the war had fallen short, and were inadequate to the sums that had been funded. It was not fair, however, to consider the produce merely, it was also necessary to consider what the tax would probably produce when the war had ceased. The honourable gentleman conceived the taxes of 1796 to have fallen short because he supposed that the wine tax would not be so productive; several of them had not however yet been fairly brought to proof; and the wine duty had laboured under disadvantages which it was needless to enumerate. But unless the trial was fairly made, and it was ascertained that in the course of a full year the wine duty had not produced the sum at which it was estimated, it could not be said that any deficiency existed. Besides, although they had fallen for the first two years of war, might not they rise in peace to the sum at which they had been stated? The argument of the honourable gentleman only proved that it was proper to wait and see what the event would be, and if it should appear that a real deficiency existed,

existed, he should then feel himself called upon to come forward and move an additional provision. It was necessary, however, to examine the subject with accuracy in the first place, before they admitted such a conclusion, and adopted such a measure. From such an enquiry he did not feel himself disposed to shrink. He conceived it probable that the taxes would be equal to all the funds which they were assigned to support, and he wished to know, whether the experience which had already been obtained, was such as ought to have induced him to come forward to propose additional burthens, while the necessity of so unpleasant an alternative was by no means ascertained?

Mr. Grey said a few words in explanation, to which the *Chancellor of the Exchequer* replied.

Mr. Fox said, that notwithstanding the able manner in which his honourable friend had discussed the statements of the right hon. gentleman, he should not think that he had done his duty to his constituents and to the country, if he did not deliver it as his opinion, that the speech of the right honourable gentleman was false in almost every particular, and that nothing could have a greater tendency to delude the nation upon the subject of its finance. The honourable gentleman's statements were accompanied with a great variety of general observations, which, if they were true, he would not hesitate a moment to join with those who execrated the constitution, he would consider it as an idle vaunt, he would hold that the representatives of the people no longer had the command of the people's money—that the House of Commons ought to be abolished, and that, in time of war at least, a dictator ought to be appointed to preside in the department of public finances. He had made it the boast of his administration, that in all the seasons of difficulty which had occurred, in all the circumstances of pressure which he had the misfortune to encounter, that he had never shrunk from any danger, however formidable, nor concealed any burthen, however great, which it would be necessary to impose. He allowed that sometimes he had come forward with a fair statement of facts, and when he did so he gave him credit for his candor. Was there any man in the house who was such a dupe? Was there any man in the country who was so corrupted as to have the audacity to assert, that on that day what he had said was true, after the discussion which had passed between the honourable gentleman and his honourable friend, Mr. Grey? When the Consolidation Act was passed, an act which contained

tained a great many good things, of which this was one, it provided that a paper should be annually laid before the house, giving an account of the additional charge made upon the Consolidated Fund, and likewise of the mode in which the money voted by the house was disposed of. By that paper it appeared that the charge since the war amounted to four millions, and that there was a deficiency in the produce of the taxes to the amount of 80,000*l.* after making every allowance for the stoppage of the distilleries, and for the defalcation of the Wine Tax arising from the quantity of the stock on hand. They would afterwards have an opportunity to enter into the details more at length, if it was any longer worth while, in that house, after what had that evening been advanced, to discuss any subject either generally or in the detail; it could not however escape observation, that when the deficiency was thus laid open to the public, that this fair minister should come forward without taking any notice of it, or providing any means by which it might be supplied, and boast that he had provided against every probable, and even against every possible evil; that he had disguised no existing want, and that he had taken into one comprehensive view past deficiencies, present necessities, and future emergencies. But, says this provident minister, what signifies the amount of the produce of the taxes? I calculated them at so much, and their value is not to be estimated by their actual produce, but by my calculation. - If he (Mr. Fox) calculated the actual amount of the taxes from the 5th of July, 1795, to the 5th of July, 1796, or, which was much the same thing, from the 10th of October, 1795, to the 10th of October 1796, and found a deficiency, that was nothing. He was told that the taxes never were so productive in the time of war, and he was desired to extend his calculation upon the produce to the return of peace. Here the honourable gentleman had recourse to a subterfuge, under which he could not but be detected by the most shallow observer. Who did not see that if this mode of arguing respecting the revenue of the country was admitted, that the paper upon the table was not worth a straw; that when taxes were imposed which were calculated to produce 1,000,000*l.* but which in reality only produced 800,000*l.* they might be told that this is nothing, look forward to a period of peace, when the deficiency may be supplied by regulation. He knew that the honourable gentleman was perfectly familiar with the plan of regulation, and that he had imposed heavy burthens upon
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the nation under that title : but in the present instance, granting him all the advantage he could derive from it, he was apprehensive that it would not turn out to such account as he expected. To take the duty upon Spirits for instance and the same observation was applicable to several of the other taxes which he proposed, in the time of peace, the honourable gentleman thought that the duty was as high as it could well be raised without giving encouragement to smuggling. In time of war, however, when smuggling is not so easily practised, from a variety of reasons, he was of opinion that the duty might be encreased. And yet in this time of war when we might venture to impose a higher duty than he could do with safety in time of peace, he referred to the return of peace for an increase of the produce of the tax ; at least, when he counted upon an encrease of the produce of other taxes, he did not reckon upon any diminution, of revenue in this. Still, however, he had recourse to his calculations, and the public were desired to take the amount of their revenue not from the actual produce of the taxes but from his estimate of what they would produce. So that fact was to be superseded by the honourable gentleman's opinion, and his imagination was to be held as the criterion of wealth and resources of the country. Upon the subject of the Wine Tax, which he had thought proper chiefly to dwell upon, he had asserted that the 200,000*l.* for the stock in hand ought not to be deducted. But his honourable friend had taken it at his own calculations, or at his own guesses, which perhaps he preferred, and stated a fact which was uncontroversible by any man who examined the papers upon the table, that the produce of the taxes in July, 1796, were deficient. Was there any man then who considered the subject fairly and candidly for a moment, who did not perceive that the honourable gentleman was deluding the country representing the debt to be provided for in the present year, was provided for last year ? But it might perhaps be said, that if there was a deficiency last year, there was a surplus the year before, or if not, the year before, in 1793. Then (said Mr. Fox) take the total of the charge for the last three years and compare it with the total of the revenue, and, upon such a comparison, he was afraid that the balance would be against the latter and in favour of the former. But the hon. gentleman helped out his supposition by a statement of the exports and imports for the last year.

Upon the face of this statement, however, he found, that a great part of the exports were in coffee ; and, though there

was no man just so ignorant of the produce of his own country as not to know that we do not grow a great deal of coffee in this kingdom, that the value of the exports greatly exceeds the value of the imports. He knew that they could assign a reason for this at the Custom-house; but it was a reason which would ill demonstrate the increasing commerce of the country. The hon. gentleman, however, gave out, that he only referred to the state of the exports and imports, that he did not reason upon them. If he did not reason upon them, Mr. Fox did not know what he meant by the observation which he delivered in that impressive and commanding tone which is so peculiarly his own, that the exports for last year amounted to no less than 30 millions sterling. Though he (Mr. Fox) did not wish to deprive the country of any consolation at the present moment (for, God knows, it needed all that the hon. gentleman could suggest), he could not but observe, that this was a consolation which it always had, in every war in which it was engaged. In the war in 1749, under the administration of Sir Robert Walpole, and in the war ending in 1763, the balance was in favour of exports in the same way as it was now. He had no theories of his own upon the subject; he had contented himself with contesting the theories of others: but he had no doubt that those who had studied the subject could account for the fact. He never had heard, however, of Mr. Legge, Mr. Pelham, or the late lord Chatham, or any minister before the right hon. gentleman, coming forward and pompously announcing it as matter of congratulation to the House of Commons and to the public.

To consider it in another point of view.---When he looked at the permanent charge upon the sinking fund, and calculated the peace establishment at 500,000*l.* more (which he thought he might fairly do) than 16,854,229*l.* which was the average of the peace establishment, he found that it would require near four millions of additional taxes, whereas he had only provided 2,100,000*l.* And here Mr. Fox called upon the House to reflect on the situation in which they were placed. Though they were about to vote as many taxes as some of the most glorious wars, in which the country was ever engaged, had cost the nation; taxes equal in amount to those which were imposed in the first three years of the French war, they left near two millions more to be provided for. The right hon. gentleman had dwelt for a considerable time upon the terms on which it was borrowed, and said very little upon the terms. The interest he represented

lent as so low that it was exceeded by the interest upon all the loans in the American war, excepting one. The hon. gentleman, upon the subject of loan, varied the points of his declamation as they suited his purpose. Last year, when borrowed upon the three per cents. he exulted in the flourishing state of the credit of the country, by which he was enabled to borrow at 3l. 13s. 6d. per cent. and now he boasted of the terms, and said very little about the rate of interest, because last year the terms were bad, and the interest was nominally small, whereas in the present loan the interest was large and the terms were what he considered as advantageous. But were these terms in reality advantageous to the country? When he went to pay money (though God knew he had none to pay) at the Bank on the 13th of January, he was entitled in the first place to 1l. 8s. which was one quarter's interest upon the 100l. If he paid up his subscription he would be allowed three per cent. discount; so that by advancing 95l. 12s. he received 112l. 10s. of stock in the five per cents. Supposing, on the other hand, that he wished to lay out his money in the old five per cents. and supposing them to be at 86 and a-half, there will be a dividend due about that time of 2l. 10s. which it is fair to deduct, so that by advancing 84l. he could get 100l. stock, and with the remaining 11l. 12s. he could purchase stock to the value of 113s. 16s. in the old five per cents. Of course then he would have 1l. 6s. more stock by buying into the old five per cents. than by buying into the new, or about 1s. 4d. greater interest for his money. Had he told the hon. gentleman, however, last year, when he was boasting of borrowing money at 4l. 13s. 6d. per cent. that he would be obliged to give 5l. 12s. 6d. this year, he would have treated the prediction as false and ungrounded. And, upon the right hon. gentleman's principles, this was not the whole of the interest paid for the money. When he proposed the plan of a sinking fund, and he (Mr. Fox) objected that in time of war it would encrease the taxes to an enormous extent, the hon. gentleman replied, that it would not have this effect, because by following out the plan the public would always be able to borrow money at one per cent. less interest than they would otherwise be obliged to pay. Upon his own principle then the interest paid upon the present loan was 6l. 12s. 6d. Besides, the number of circumstances in favour of the subscribers to the new loan, above what the holders of the old five per cents. enjoyed, were much more than sufficient to counterbalance the difference of interest in

favour of the latter. The holders of the old stock, at the return of peace, if stocks rise very high, are every day at the mercy of Government, and liable to be paid off at par; and, if stocks continue low, they must submit to the loss which accompanied their purchase. The holders of the stock created by the new loan, on the other hand, were guarded against both alternatives:---they could hold the stock for three years, and, when the worst came to the worst, they would have it in their choice, at the end of that period, to exchange for 3 per cents. which they would have at 75, or 4l. 10s. perpetual annuity. He put another alternative:---if the gloomy apprehensions of those were realised, who supposed that a peace with France would only be a truce, during which the stocks would labour under a constant depression, the holders of the new loan would have it in their power to be paid off at par two years after the termination of the war. Would any man assert that these were not advantages in terms far superior to 1l. 6s. in stock, or 1s. 4d. per cent. interest. It would be said, that these were only speculations; but they were speculations for the justice and probability of which he could appeal to fact and experience.—Mr. Fox adverted to the state of the funds at the conclusion of the American war, and inferred the likelihood that a change at the termination of the present contest similar to what then took place.

The right hon. gentleman not only laid burdens upon posterity, as other ministers had done, and must do, when they added to the national debt by encreasing the capital, and consequently the amount of the interest, that posterity would be called upon to pay; but he had in this loan refined upon the practice, and loaded posterity also with the *bonus* of the loan, a thing perfectly new in itself, and directly opposite to the very principle for which he had so repeatedly claimed credit from the public upon his general system of finance: and here he could not help asking the Minister if he would do him the honour to refer to a conversation which took place between them in the year 1793, upon the subject of a loan. He had thought it his duty to oppose the loan, and to call for a division upon it. The minister had then asked what the House was to do upon the occasion, under all the circumstances? Mr. Fox said, it was suggested, he believed by many hon. friends of his, by himself he was sure it was suggested, that it would be better that the House should refuse to ratify the improvident bargain made by the minister; to open the matter again, and to hazard the consequences of calling

calling on the public to come forward in an open loan, for the relief of the necessities of the state. What did the minister advance in answer to this? First, what was naturally expected from him by those who knew him, that the bargain he had made was not so bad as those who disapproved of it stated it to be, and afterwards, that what had been suggested concerning an open loan was a measure that could not in any case be resorted to with any probability of success. How he came now to change his opinion upon that measure, could not easily be guessed. Had the minister miscalculated the zeal of the country; or having calculated the zeal accurately, had he discovered that there is more of it at this moment for the prosecution of the war, than there was in the year 1793? At a period when the death of the French king had happened but two months before: when we were fighting, it was said, for law, for order, for morality, for religion, for property, and for every thing that was dear to, and held civil society together? If he had, it was an extraordinary discovery; and yet he could not at that period, under such circumstances, trust to an open loan for six millions, although now he found that sixteen millions might be advantageously raised in that very way. How was this to be accounted for? Was the zeal, as he had asked already, greater now than it was then? Were our prospects of succeeding in it greater now than they were then? Was the danger greater to us from a continuance of the war at that moment than at this? Was the danger of making peace with France greater now than at that period? Or if neither of these was the reason, what in reality was to be considered as the minister's reason for knowing it to be unsafe to rely upon the consequences of an open loan for only six millions in 1793, and of his being so entirely confident of its good effects, for raising sixteen millions in December, 1796? The truth of the matter was that the minister had grossly miscalculated upon both those points, as he certainly had, and as would appear in due time, miscalculated upon many other points in the course of the present war. It came now in turn for him to take notice of the political part of the minister's speech this night, but before he did so, it would perhaps be proper for him to advert to another topic in it. The minister had stated that in many things he had, he would own, miscalculated;—it was very true he had done so, and for which he did not blame him. It was common to our nature to err in our conjectures; but prudence prescribed to us not to be too ready to rely on the probability of our conjectures, especially when
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we had found in many instances that our conjectures were erroneous. He blamed the minister for having placed too much of that reliance upon his own conjectures, when he was furnished with so many instances of their fallacy. Had the present Committee attended to the minister's speech in this House at this time twelve-months, they would feel much upon the present occasion; for his own part he recollected it well—it made a deep, a very deep impression upon him. The minister then said the navy debt was about *a million and a half*. In this he had the greatest confidence, and for which he assigned his reasons. In April following he stated the navy debt to be *four millions*—that it was no more he had the greatest confidence. In October last this subject came under discussion; the minister said he believed the navy bills and the navy debt, between which, however, he made some distinction, had increased to between *six and seven millions*.—Now, on the 7th of December he stated this same navy debt to be *eight millions two hundred thousand pounds*. He did not know that the minister could have avoided all, or any of these mistakes, but this he knew, the mistakes were so numerous, and to an amount so large, that the House would do well to confide but little in his conjectures and speculative calculations. He would warn the Committee, and the public, of the probable effect of confiding in such vague speculations. He would ask them whether they believed that the resources of any country ever were, or ever would be, able to support itself under this sort of indefinite expence. Then the minister came forward with a general excuse for all his false calculations under the head of unforeseen events. Under this head he accounted for much of the error of his calculation, and a copious theme it was. He instanced the very high price of provisions, and of every article for which government was bound to pay. In the name of God let him ask how this matter stood? When the House was that time twelve-month sitting from day to day, and from week to week, upon the high price of provisions, when their Committees made various reports, and when the House came to various resolutions, when various resolutions were entered into in different parts of the kingdom upon that very subject; was it not wonderful that the minister should not be aware of all this in April last? What the ideas of the minister were upon this subject he could not tell; but he should be glad to learn from him that the price of provisions was likely to be lower. He should be glad to know, if the minister was prepared to tell us, that the price of butcher's meat and meat
for

for salting for the navy was likely to be at a more moderate price than it is at present. He feared the minister had no such good news to communicate to the committee. How far the minister's measures had occasioned the present high price of all the articles of life might very fitly be made the subject of future enquiry.

With regard to the subject of the bills of Grenada in aid of commercial credit and expectations of the minister as to what may be brought to the public aid on their account, he could say nothing; as the minister had given to the committee no specific information upon that subject he could only say, that most probably the minister would have another opportunity of making another experiment of the same kind upon this subject, if he was partial to it.

He was now come to the vote of credit, on which the minister had spoken out plainly and candidly. He had said he had given to the Emperor, without the consent of parliament, *twelve hundred thousand pounds*, and that he is to continue to do it if he shall think it necessary. He had not seen the date of this advance; but those who were members of the last parliament could not have forgotten that for the last three months of that parliament, not a week elapsed in which some question was not put to the minister, in which he was called upon to declare, whether he intended to grant any pecuniary assistance to the Emperor? Did the minister mean to say he intended to give it to him, but that he thought his own authority for that purpose was sufficient; that it was superfluous to submit such a subject to parliament; that he could issue the money of his own authority? Perhaps he did. He might borrow an example from his own conduct to keep the measure in countenance. It was of a piece with his advice to his majesty to continue him as his minister against the declared opinion of the House of Commons in the year 1784. Now he had gone one step further than to advise the King to continue him as minister, in opposition to the express opinion of the House of Commons, he had shewn to the people of Great Britain that he is a better judge than the people of Great Britain, to whom their money, and how much of it, when and how it shall be disposed of, shall be given to any foreign prince. "If (said Mr. Fox) these are the sentiments to be acted upon in this country; if the minister be permitted to carry them into effect; I declare for myself, that the constitution of this country is not worth fighting for. I wish to know on what principle it is that the minister takes this power upon himself rather

“ rather than refer it to the Commons of Great Britain, to
 “ whom and to whom only, it constitutionally belongs. If
 “ he directs the application of the money of the people
 “ thus upon foreign affairs without the consent of Parlia-
 “ ment, I see no reason why he should not claim the same
 “ power, (as I dare say he will if he succeeds in this) over
 “ the whole of our domestic concerns. I am sure the rea-
 “ son he gives for the one, will just as well apply to the
 “ other. He says that Parliament could not calculate so
 “ well as he could upon the necessity, and upon the
 “ amount. That may be said, as correctly of our domestic
 “ as of our foreign affairs. Until this instance had occur-
 “ red, the minister thought it decent to apply to Parliament,
 “ and to give you an estimate of what you are to provide
 “ for; now he tells you that he did not think it necessary
 “ to consult you, because you are not judges of the extent
 “ of it. Did he consult you on the principle of it? He
 “ certainly did not, though repeatedly solicited. He suf-
 “ fered the last Parliament to be dissolved, he suffered you
 “ all to meet your constituents with an assurance, I do not
 “ say his positive and declared assurance (but by his silence
 “ he gave you an implied assurance), that no money was to
 “ be advanced to the Emperor in the interval of the dissolu-
 “ tion. On the 27th of September you met. Did he give
 “ you any intimation of his having advanced this money
 “ before you were called together? Did he give you any
 “ intimation of it before this very night, when he comes
 “ before you with his fresh burthens on the people? Not a
 “ word! For this conduct I say he ought to be impeached.
 “ He has had it in his power to consult you upon this sub-
 “ ject long ago, as it was his duty. He has neglected to
 “ do so, by which he has manifested a determination to
 “ dispose of the money of the people of this country without
 “ consulting their representatives. This is aggravated by
 “ his not calling parliament together sooner. If he had
 “ advanced the money before you met, why did he not tell
 “ you so. What reason can be assigned for this? In the
 “ name of God, what can be said but that the minister
 “ thinks his judgement better than the judgement of the
 “ representatives of the people of Great Britain? He has
 “ said much upon the time on which this money was
 “ advanced. If he had any intention of advancing this
 “ money before the dissolution, why did he not state that
 “ intention to the last Parliament? Or if he found out the
 “ necessity of it since the dissolution, might he not have
 “ said

“ said so to the present Parliament long ago. But he has
“ done it for the purpose of establishing the principle that
“ ministers are better judges of the manner in which the
“ public money is to be applied, than the representatives of
“ the people. The minister says that we should be cheerful
“ in lending our money to the Emperor, because we have
“ seen in the Emperor those heroic qualities which usually
“ accompany good faith. Now, supposing heroism to be a
“ good criterion of good faith in pecuniary concerns, I should
“ like to try the effect of this mode of reasoning. Suppose
“ for a moment that we were in a state of neutrality with
“ regard to the French Republic, and it was proposed that
“ we should lend money to the French, would the minister
“ say we should send them money? certainly he would not;
“ and yet if good faith in pecuniary engagements was to be
“ measured by heroic qualities, there are none to whom we
“ should be more ready to lend our money; for of their
“ four they have given abundant proofs.”

Mr. Fox then proceeded to state the situation of the Emperor and the French at this moment, in which he maintained that with all the successes of the Austrians in the latter part of the present campaign, another could not be opened to more advantage to the Emperor, than he had at the commencement of the last. In this part of his speech he took notice of the recent successes of the French in Italy, and by way of answering the praises that were bestowed on the good qualities of the House of Austria, he instanced the cruelties that had been exercised on the unfortunate M. la Fayette, which he said excited horror all over Europe.

He then proceeded to observe, that the minister had that night omitted the brilliant comparison which he had often made between the English and the French finances. The French had been, week after week, and month after month, not on the verge, but in the gulph of bankruptcy. He had omitted also to state that the French had, by becoming the allies of the Dutch, partaken of the sluggishness of the Hollanders. He did not know, he said, whether the French had passed the gulph of bankruptcy; he hoped they had, for while they were in it, they were most dreadful enemies to this country. But to return to the minister's calculation of events. He had year after year calculated upon the events of the war, and year after year the publick had been misled by his calculations. At one time he was sure the navy debt would only be a million and an half; after that he calculated the same debt at four millions—then at six or seven millions,

and now it was stated to be above eight millions. What security had the House and the publick that the minister would not miscalculate in future, as he had already done, in the course of the present war? By his miscalculations he had added to the debt of this country one hundred and fifty millions. By his miscalculations rivers of human blood had been made to flow all over the world. The minister now talked of peace; he hoped in God we would soon enjoy that blessing; but as the minister was so fond of his own calculations, he wished he would some day or night sit down in his closet and calculate what a sum of human happiness he had destroyed by his false calculations already; what a waste of human life he had occasioned, because he could not sooner discover the French were "capable of maintaining the accustomed relations of peace and amity with other powers." He did not wish to distress the minister with any unreasonable applications, but he believed he should puzzle him a good deal were he to ask at what period the French became capable of maintaining the usual relations of peace and amity with other powers more than they could at the moment when we entered into this contest.

Mr. Fox took notice of the great difference between the ministers of the Elector of Hanover and those of the king of Great Britain, with respect to the prudence of all powers making peace with the French republic, and on which he made many very strong observations. He had heard it often said that the spirit of the people of this country was very great. He believed it to be so. He gloried in that spirit. But if the system on which this war was carried on was to be continued much longer, he had his doubts of the continuation of that spirit. A great People who saw hundreds of their fellow-subjects fall, their national debt increased above one hundred and fifty millions, their credit sinking; the necessaries of life becoming, by their price, almost entirely out of the reach of the labouring class; and all this merely because one man, or a few men in the country made false calculations, were not likely to preserve their old spirit. Such were the evils which the minister had already occasioned by his false calculations. To these charges he hoped the minister would have an opportunity of answering at the bar of the public. He knew that every man who reasoned fairly would be deeply affected by these things. Every man who thought deliberately upon the subject would mourn over the hundreds of thousands of human beings who had lost their lives in this contest, because the minister of this country

try miscalculated upon the power of the French; and what in comparison with the loss of so many human lives, was trifling, but which, in other respects, was mightily important, was the accumulation of our burthens. The national debt of this country was now above four hundred millions; he had not calculated exactly what proportion of it was owing to this war altogether; still less was he able to guess what part of it was accumulated at particular periods of the war; but he was now ready to declare what he had often declared, and still oftener felt, that he thought this war unjust in its commencement, impolitic in its progress, and he believed there was not one man of sense in this country, who had any anxiety for its welfare, who did not from his heart wish it was at an end. This he was sure was the general desire of the people of this country. It was the wish even of that House, or he was strangely deceived. This brought to his mind what had been lately published by a gentleman whose talents he always admired, and for whom, notwithstanding every thing that had happened, he had still great esteem, he meant Mr. Burke; that gentleman had lately published it as his opinion, that the minority in Parliament speak the sentiments of the people of England at this hour, and that they have done so for some time past. On the subject of the war, Mr. Fox said, he had no doubt, but that the minority spoke the sentiments of the people. On the subject of the war, at least, he would maintain that to be the case; he believed it to have been so ever since the time of Robespierre; but he would defy any man to shew that this was not the wish of this country only, but also that it was not the general wish of all Europe at this hour. He would go further, and say, that in the opinion of Europe at large, nothing had impeded the arrival of general tranquillity for a long time, but the opinion of the ministers of this country. All this arose from the miscalculation of the right hon. gentleman; however, that very minister now talked of peace; but let him consider on what terms they were likely to obtain it, and compare such terms with those which we might have obtained a great while ago, and then let him endeavour to calculate the mischief which his false calculations have brought, not upon this country merely, but also on all Europe. Perhaps he might think the Cape of Good Hope an equivalent for all we had suffered. If he did, neither his humanity nor his judgment were to be envied. He was afraid, he said, that there was no point to be stated in the resolutions of that night that brought in question the propriety of lending mo-

uey to the Emperor, without the consent of parliament, and therefore he could not manifest, by his vote, his opinion upon that subject. However, when it should come before the House, he should certainly meet it with his direct negative, for it was a violent and daring attack on the British constitution. It was essential for the House to come to a vote upon the question, whether the minister was to be permitted to apply money for foreign alliances without the consent of parliament or not; and that we should know whether we are in a free country, or are mocked only with the name of freedom? He should say no more now upon that subject; of the taxes he should deliver his opinion hereafter.

The resolutions were then put and carried; after which the House being resumed, the report of the committee was ordered to be received the next day.

Deferred committees of ways and means and supply to Friday next.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, *December 8.*

The committee on the Quakers' Bill was deferred till this day se'nnight.

BREACH OF PRIVILEGE.

The resolution of the House, declaring that Alexander Morris had been guilty of a breach of the privileges of the House, having been read,

Mr. Grey stated, that having heard that resolution, no gentleman could deny that this breach was one of a most flagrant nature; yet it was not his intention to aggravate the offence, but merely to give it as his opinion, that the House could not do less than commit the offender to some prison. The duration of the imprisonment would depend upon the House; at present he should move, that he be committed to Newgate.

The motion was agreed to, and the Speaker was directed to issue the necessary order.

Mr. Grey said, that the House had just now inflicted on a person, who had been guilty of a breach of privilege, that punishment which he deserved. Yet however great the offence of that person was, it would not be denied that the guilt of those who urged him to the commission of it was much greater; and it was under this impression, that he meant to state such information as had been communicated to him,

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in order that the House might enquire how far their privileges had been broken, or might do away those reports which had been in general circulation. The nature of that information was, that Mr. Henry Speck and Captain Bartlett were the persons who had prevailed on Alexander Morris not to attend, that they had given him a large sum of money, and that they had carried him off to Ireland; that Captain Bartlett, on his return, went to Morris's wife, and said, that on her husband's coming back he might be committed, but that the fees, if they amounted to 500*l.* or double, would be paid by Mr. Thellusson. In addition to this, he had been informed that Mr. Thellusson had given a draft for 100*l.* or 180*l.* to Mrs. Morris to go to her husband. He therefore moved that the matter of this complaint be heard at the bar of the House.

Mr. *Thellusson* declared, upon his honour, that no individual, of his family, had had any communication with Mr. Morris. With respect to Captain Bartlett, he did not know him, but he was certain that he had had no authority to do what he had been charged to have done. He declared also, upon his honour, that Mr. Speck had no commission to tamper with Mr. Morris.

Mr. *Anstruther* said, that he was not quite certain whether he understood perfectly the nature of the complaint; but, in the way in which it was stated, it amounted to no more than a suggestion, that some offence had been committed by some person. It seemed to him, that the subject might be matter of future enquiry; but at present it would be improper to discuss the complaint, supposing it to be ever so 'precise. The committee for trying the merits of the Southwark election had reported to the House, that Alexander Morris had refused to obey their summons. If he recollected right, it had been stated, among other reasons, in the petition against the last Southwark election, that there was a complaint before the House that might affect the sitting member. Until, therefore, that petition had been decided upon, it would not be proper to examine the matter of the present complaint, because it might, or might not, criminate either the sitting member or the petitioner. He would therefore wish it to be postponed for some time, and on that account would move the previous question.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he would second the amendment, or rather he could wish that the honourable gentleman, who made the motion, would withdraw it. He thought it impossible that the House could go into an examination

mination of the complaint till after the decision of the election committee, and that, in the mean time, it would be improper to interfere by coming to any determination on the subject of this complaint, which would tend to prejudice the enquiry which would take place before a committee on the merits of the election. He wished, therefore, that no idea might go forth of the House having yet given any opinion on the subject.

Mr. Grey said, it did seem to him that it would be proper to consider the subject before the committee entered into a consideration of the petition, in order that there might be no obstacles to the procuring of proper witnesses; it was on this account that he had brought forward the matter of the complaint then, in order that the petitioner might bring before the committee what evidence he might deem to be necessary; he did not, however, wish to persevere against what appeared to be the sense of the House. Before he sat down he found it necessary to say, that when Mr. Thellusson declared, upon his honour, that he had no communication with Alexander Morris, he was, for his own part, as ready to give implicit credit to that declaration as any man in the House. Mr. Thellusson, however, would do him justice to recollect, that he had stated nothing from his own information, but from the reports of others. He therefore would withdraw his motion, though he did not think the reasons urged against it were strong, or that the examination of the complaint now would be attended with any improper influence upon the committee.

Mr. Grey's motion, and the motion for the previous question were both withdrawn.

Mr. Grey stated, that it would be proper to discharge the order for the attendance of Mr. Speck and Captain Bartlett.

The order for the attendance of Mr. Speck and Captain Bartlett was accordingly discharged.

Sir E. Knatchbull wished the special report of the Southwark committee to be read.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* wished some reasons to be stated for this motion. His objections to it were similar to what he had advanced against that of the honourable gentleman (Mr. Grey), and he thought it would tend to a discussion which ought to be deferred for the present.

The motion was withdrawn.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* gave notice, that on Monday se'nnight, in a committee of the whole House, he would produce

produce a statement of the financial concerns of the East India Company; and that on Wednesday se'nnight he would propose the vote of credit.

Mr. Grey said, that he understood the vote of credit was taken as supply the preceding day.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* replied in the affirmative, but that it had not yet been voted.

MONEY SENT TO THE EMPEROR.

Mr. Hobart brought up the report of the committee of Ways and Means, and the resolutions were read a first time.

On the motion that the resolutions be read a second time---

Mr. Fox rose, and delivered himself nearly to the following effect;---“ It is not my intention on this evening to enter into any detailed argument upon the resolutions. Future opportunities will occur of discussing the particulars of which they consist, and it is my earnest wish that every member of the House may pay particular attention to the subject to which they belong, under a strong conviction that the greatest exertions will be necessary to put the finances of the country in a proper situation. But this is not the point to which I propose on the present evening particularly to call the attention of the House. I wish them now to attend to the degraded situation in which the Commons of Great Britain stand in relation to the Executive Government of the country. It will be easily perceived that here I allude to the 1,200,000*l.* which has been granted to the Emperor by ministers without either the previous knowledge or the consent of parliament, a grant which I contend to be directly contrary to positive laws, and a flagrant violation of the constitution of parliament and of the country. I certainly should have expected that since the honourable gentleman did not think it worth his while to acknowledge the House of Commons before he advanced such a sum to a foreign power, that when he informed them of the circumstances he would have accompanied it with some explanation. But from the mode in which the money was given, as well as from the speech of the minister in opening the budget, I evidently perceive that the whole affair has been conducted, not for the convenience of ministers, or the advantage which they might imagine would result from it, (though God knows this would have been bad enough) but that it has been done for the purpose of setting a precedent in the annals of the constitution,

stitution, from which the public money is to be understood as lying at the disposal, not of the representatives of the people, but of the ministers of the crown. When I went home last night and reflected upon the various subjects which had passed under discussion, I must confess that I felt hurt at the idea of having appeared to give my assent, at least at not having positively dissented, from resolutions which appeared to me so extremely unconstitutional. I considered myself as having been guilty of a neglect of duty, and as called upon by the relations in which I stand to my constituents, and to the country, to come forward this day and enter my protest against a measure which I regard as an infringement of the rights of the people, and of the privilege of this House: for I should look upon myself as a traitor to the public were I to vote one shilling, or one man, for the service of the crown without the consent of parliament. We have been in the practice of hearing, for some time past, very warm and elaborate eulogiums upon the constitution of the country, notwithstanding all the wounds which it has lately received, and I always thought that whatever differences of opinion might subsist upon some points, there were others on which we were all agreed. Though we might differ in sentiment respecting the prevalence of power in one branch of the constitution over another, and in affixing precise limits to each, I thought and believed that there was no man who would maintain that it was right and proper for the Executive power to usurp the Legislative power; or, that it was just and lawful for the Crown to supercede the office of Parliament. Let us consider the nature of the transaction before us:—Had ministers, when parliament was not sitting, found themselves called upon by an imperious sense of duty, dictated by a combination of urgent and unforeseen circumstances, to grant a certain pecuniary aid to the Emperor, and had they taken the earliest opportunity upon the meeting of parliament to submit the whole of the business to its consideration, then would have been the time for the House to pass a decision upon their conduct, upon a candid and impartial review of the situation in which they were placed, and the motives by which it was fair to suppose them to have been actuated. But the present case is wholly different. In the course of the last three months of the last parliament repeated applications were made to them respecting their intentions of granting or withholding pecuniary assistance to the Emperor; and from the silence which they persevered in preserving, it was natural to infer that they would not grant

grant such assistance without the previous concurrence of parliament. In fact, however, we find that a great part of the money given to his Imperial Majesty has been granted without that concurrence, not during the parliamentary recesses, but when parliament was actually sitting. If parliament had not been sitting, and ministers had thought it prudent to grant pecuniary assistance to the Emperor, I say it ought to have been assembled for the purpose of deliberating upon it; but when parliament was sitting, in God's name why were they not consulted? Was it because ministers were afraid that the House wanted confidence in them? The whole course of their experience taught them the contrary. No! It was because the honourable gentleman thought himself a better judge of the propriety of the time, and the extent of giving such assistance, than the House of Commons. I shall not dispute with him at present, whether he was or not. The constitution says, he was not, and under this authority he was bound to act. The constitution says, that the publick money is at the disposal, not of the crown, but of parliament, and that therefore he had no right to dispose of such a sum without the consent of parliament. I do not argue the point of his superior knowledge or his superior wisdom, I think it fairer to stand upon authority, and when the constitution speaks precisely, as it does upon this point, he nor no other man has a right to resist its will. The question now is not, whether the constitution be good or bad, whether this be a wise or unwise arrangement; it has its advantages, and it no doubt may have its inconveniencies; but it was his duty as the minister of a free constitution, to adhere to the principles which it has laid down, and to the rules which it has prescribed, the first and most important of which is, that the disposal of the public money is vested, not in the king, but in the people. When he violated the fundamental principle, and infringed this sacred law, what else can I infer than a desire to establish a precedent against the constitution. The circumstances which have accompanied the transaction justify the inference which I draw. I find from the accounts upon the table, that a considerable part of the sum was issued in November last; how then does the matter stand? Ministers finding themselves called upon to lend pecuniary aid to the Emperor during the recess, the measure, instead of being laid before parliament immediately upon its meeting, was studiously concealed for the purpose of making it

a precedent in the history of the country to be made known to Great Britain and to the world, that the disposal of the public money is no longer in the hands of the House of Commons but that it is in the hands of the crown. We heard something like an apology yesterday from the honourable gentlemen, which, to me, appeared as unsatisfactory as the conduct which it was brought forward to justify is unconstitutional. It consisted of two parts: in the first place, that parliament was not so good a judge of the amount of the assistance to be granted to the Emperor as the honourable gentleman; and, secondly, that from the discussions to which the publicity of the transaction would lead, considerable mischief might have taken place. With respect to the first, it takes the point at issue for granted, by supposing that an absolute is preferable to a limited Monarchy, and that our free constitution would be much better were it transformed into a despotism. As to the danger to be apprehended from the publicity of the transaction, the pretence may be used upon other occasions as well as upon this, till at last we come to the old exploded argument, that the money of the people ought to be vested with the king's ministers, and not with their own representatives. In short, the honourable gentleman tells you that he did not think it worth while to acknowledge you at all in the matter, because you were neither fit judges of the propriety of the quantum or of the period for granting the money. He takes care, however, that you shall finally be informed of it; but when? When it comes to be paid. Let us see also from what funds this loan has been raised. One part of it has been raised upon a vote of credit, and another part has been taken from the money voted for paying the extraordinaries of the year, and of course certain services of which parliament approved, and for which it made provision, remain unpaid. In what situation then is the House of Commons placed? if they refuse to make good a debt, which I hope and trust they will, a part of the publick service will remain in arrears. They are reduced therefore to this dilemma, either to discharge a debt, in contracting which they were not acknowledged, and for which they are not responsible, or by refusing to discharge it to leave services which were sanctioned by their approbation unpaid. When we look back, Sir, one cannot help observing a peculiar train of proceeding. For the first time the Budget was opened this season before the extraordinaries of the army were voted. I know the reason that is given for it is, that the

the Budget was opened uncommonly early in the season. I would remind the House, however, that it was opened last year on the 7th of December as well as this year, (with this difference, that last year parliament had not sitten so long before it) and yet the extraordinaries of the army were voted previous to the opening of the budget. This season the account was not so much as produced till the day of the opening of the budget, more strongly to mark the precedent, and that it may be said in future times, that in 1796 the minister of the country, after having of his own accord granted a loan to the Emperor without the consent of parliament, did not deign even to inform them of it upon their meeting; nay, that he had kept back the account of the extraordinaries of the year, lest the House of Commons, by sanctioning or conniving at the measure, might in the least have weakened the precedent. When I am upon this subject, I cannot refrain from remarking also, that last night, for the first time, we heard that the country was at war with Spain. -Those (as most gentlemen are) who are in the habit of reading the papers may have seen that it is some months since it was proclaimed; that letters of marque have been issued, and that it has been announced by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; in short, it is only in their capacity as members of parliament that they did not know it till last night. I am aware that this may be defended upon the score of right, and that the prerogative of declaring war is vested in the crown. But how far it is gracious not to announce the exercise of that right to the House of Commons is another question, especially when it is recollected that the ministers of the crown are so little scrupulous about entrenching upon the rights of the people. To return, however, to the immediate subject of discussion. Were I to put the question to any man who is at all acquainted with the constitution of the country, when expences are to be incurred, who are the best judges of the propriety of incurring them? He would answer, the Commons of Great Britain. And were I to add, when the propriety of incurring certain expences is decided, who are the best judges of the extent to which they ought to be incurred? He would not hesitate also to reply, the Commons of Great Britain. When we give up these two strong holds the constitution is lost. What then are we to think of the minister who wrests them out of our possession, or what will be said by future historians of that parliament which tamely gave them up without one syllable of remonstrance or one threat of defi-

ance? It is true that the House have so far relaxed from the rigorous exercise of their privilege as to give a vote of credit to the minister that he may be enabled to meet unforeseen emergencies. This, however, was always to a limited extent, but in the present instance he thought that we were as little qualified to judge of the extent of the assistance to be given to the Emperor, as of the propriety of giving it. He cannot surely pretend that by twisting any vote of the last Parliament he was at liberty to send pecuniary succours to the Emperor.—Notwithstanding the obsequiousness of that parliament, notwithstanding all the wounds which it gave the constitution, and notwithstanding all the evils which it has entailed upon the country, I much doubt whether it would have sanctioned a proposal for giving another loan to the Emperor. With regard to this parliament I hope it will vindicate its own dignity and importance at the outset, and shew the ministers of the country that if they be advisers of the measures of the crown, the House of Commons are the guardians of the public purse. If, on the other hand, they patiently acquiesce in the most daring encroachments upon their rights, what figure will they make in history, or how will they answer to their country for those liberties which they have wantonly sacrificed at the shrine of unprincipled ambition? The honourable gentleman last night expressed a hope that parliament would continue their confidence, but I hope he did not mean by this that they will allow him to go on disposing of the money of the country without their consent, or if he does, I earnestly hope that in this, at least they will disappoint his expectations.—On the present evening I shall think it my duty to take the sense of the House upon every question, whether of supply or of ways and means, and if I succeed I shall move on an early day that his majesty's ministers in granting a loan to the Emperor without the consent of parliament, have been guilty of a high crime and misdemeanor. If, however, the House shall not think proper to agree with me on this evening, I shall defer that motion, conceiving that it would not be attended with success. I hope, however, that in this case the subject will be taken up out of doors; that the people will, in every part of the country, express their abhorrence of the doctrine last night delivered by the honourable Gentleman, and that the House of Commons will be obliged (I do not mean by force, but by the voice of the country) to assert those rights which they have tamely and pusillanimously surrendered. For my own part, I con-

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sider this as a more serious attack upon the constitution of the country, than what was conveyed through the writings of Paine, or of any man whatever. The nature of a libel is explained by its tendency, to bring the constitution and government into contempt. Were I, said Mr. Fox, upon a jury, deciding upon any composition containing the speech of the right honourable gentleman last night, I would not hesitate a moment to pronounce it a libel upon the constitution: for if the doctrines laid down in it are constitutional, ours is a most vile and detestable constitution. Even after all the attacks which have been made upon it, and all the wounds which it received, we should have still shed our blood in its defence; but, if this new defalcation is to be added to what we were formerly robbed of, I should wish to know what there is left to interest our feelings, or to excite our exertions? This will, indeed, be an incalculable addition to all the woes and calamities which the war has induced; and if, after what we have lost in money, in reputation, and in blood, we are also to submit to this oppression, the House of Commons is no longer to be considered as a branch of the constitution; and there will be little in our government to distinguish it from that of absolute monarchies.

The *Chancellor* of the *Exchequer*, said in reply "Those who never before had an opportunity to hear the speeches which the honourable gentleman had been accustomed to pronounce, and of observing the line of argument which he has been accustomed to employ upon every public question which has been agitated in this House, would certainly have supposed upon the present occasion that this day, for the first time in his life, the honourable gentleman had felt real alarm for the liberties and constitution of his country, and for the first time a point had occurred so intimately connected with the preservation of their political rights, that in the case of a decision hostile to the opinion which he holds, it is to be vindicated by nothing less than an appeal to the people. But it has happened to those who have often had occasion to attend to the honourable gentleman, to have heard the same danger represented, and the same consequences applied. It is not once, twice, or three times that the honourable gentleman has reprobated with the same emphasis, stigmatised with the same epithets, and denounced as pregnant with ruin to the liberties of the country—measures which it had been thought necessary to bring forward, and which the wisdom of parliament had thought proper to adopt; nor is it now the first time that the honourable gentleman and those who set near him

him have made a stand behind the last dike of the constitution. It is not the first, the second, nor the third time, I repeat, that upon points which a great majority of the House and of the country had deemed to be connected with the preservation of their dearest interests, the honourable gentleman has raised the cry of alarm, and in which he has affected to see the downfall of the constitution, and the destruction of our liberties. Not many months even have elapsed since the honourable gentleman stated with the same confidence, and urged with the same fervour, that the liberties of England were annihilated, and its constitution gone, if certain bills then pending passed into law, laws under which, I will venture to affirm, that a vast majority of the people of this country agree that the substantial blessings of their free government have been preserved, and the designs of our real enemies have hitherto been frustrated. Nay, not many hours have elapsed since the honourable gentleman gave a two month's notice of his intention to move the repeal of those acts which he once represented as a grievance under which he could not sleep. There is, indeed something striking, something peculiarly singular, in the manner in which this new constitutional light has broken in upon the honourable gentleman. This declaration of mine, which has infused so deadly an alarm into the mind of the honourable gentleman, this declaration by which the constitution is annihilated, was made yesterday! This declaration is admitted to have been made in a way the most clear and distinct, indeed so clear as to magnify the danger, and to aggravate the offence. This declaration, which he now feels to be so fatal to the liberties of the country, so repugnant to the principles of the constitution, as to render it incumbent upon him to make it the ground of an extraordinary proceeding, and the reason of signal animadversion against me, did not yesterday strike him as of so much importance as immediately to call him up! It did not inspire with any particular sensation his honourable friend near him (Mr. Grey,) a gentleman by nature not free from jealousy, and of a vigilance which it was not easy to elude—it had not however drawn from him the smallest remark of any kind that could expose the danger with which it was pregnant, or betray the feeling with which he is inspired. It never disturbed the serenity of his temper, though perhaps not the least liable to irritation, nor had it prevented him from laying before the House the details of his various calculations with the most calm and placid equanimity, the very moment after he had witnessed

witnessed the death-wound of the constitution! After an interval of debate it deranged none of the calculations of the honourable gentleman, it had not driven out of his head his reasonings of the three *per cents.* nor his remarks upon the navy debt, a single circumstance of objection which the survey of the subject had presented, nor had it deterred him from allowing the resolutions to be carried with an unanimous vote. But after the honourable gentleman had slept upon this subject he discovers that the speech which he yesterday heard with so much indifference, contains principles of such dreadful tendency, and threatens consequences of such fatal operation, as to lead him to propose not merely a censure of the doctrine, not the reprobation of the particular measure, not merely the punishment of the person by whom it was uttered, but which would induce him in the first instance to take revenge for the error or the guilt of a minister, by giving his negative to the whole resolutions, which have no relation to the declaration; nor to the measure upon which it was founded, which would prompt him to suspend those supplies which will give authority to the negotiations for peace, or in case of being reduced to that alternative, give energy to the operations of War; that would induce him to tell the enemy by the very next post, by which the unanimous determination of parliament to provide for every situation is conveyed, that the House of Commons had interfered to stop the effect of their former decision, had suspended the means that were to add weight to the exertions of the executive government, and at so critical a moment of the negotiation had committed the interests of this country and her allies, and flattered the hopes and raised the pretensions of the enemy. Such is the length to which the proposition of the honourable gentlemen goes. It is not to remedy the imputed crime which has been committed, nor to guard against the chance of its occurring in future, but it is calculated to derange every measure which may be in train and to disappoint every design that may be in contemplation. I cannot, however, but hope, that when the honourable gentleman has viewed the subject with more consideration, when he has again slept upon his wrath, he will recur to that coolness which he first experienced, and that his vehemence and his alarm will subside. But whether the honourable gentleman is to be deterred by the prospect of the dangers which must arise from the measure which he proposes, at least, I cannot doubt that it will have its just weight with the
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House. The honourable gentleman says, that if he succeed in his present motion, he will move the House against his majesty's ministers for the part they have acted upon this occasion. There is one thing that I will entreat of the honourable gentleman, and he may be assured it is the only supplication that I will address to him upon this subject, and it is, that if he can prove to the House that I have violated the constitution, and committed the crime of which he accuses me, he will not defer a single moment to take the step which he has threatened; that he will confine his efforts to that object, and that he will not combine with the vengeance he pursues, a measure that involves the ruin of his country. Let the punishment destined for ministers light upon them alone, and let the consequences of the measures which they employed, to avert the dangers which threatened their country; the measures which they adopted for the safety, for the salvation of Europe, rest upon themselves. This much I address to the honourable gentleman, not for personal considerations, nor do I intreat the boon as a matter of personal indulgence. If it be refused by him, I hope at least that the House will be actuated by more moderate feelings, and guided by wiser maxims. The rest of the honourable gentleman's propositions, and the point of his observations, are so exclusively confined to myself, that I am at a loss in what way to proceed, or whether I ought to trespass upon the House with any remarks upon them, since the subject is intended for a more full discussion. I cannot however refrain from exposing the strange and extraordinary misrepresentations which the honourable gentleman has given of the general question upon which he builds the conclusion of criminality, and I cannot doubt that when the House perceive the foundation upon which the accusation is raised, they will be able to judge of the effect that ought to be given to the others with which it was complicated. The honourable gentleman stated the general principle which constituted the chief security of our liberties—the power of controuling the publick expenditure; and I hope there is little difference of opinion upon this subject. The honourable gentleman says, that if there is one thing sure in the constitution, it is this, and if it be violated he maintains that the people still possess the means of obtaining redress. After the representations which the House have heard upon the dilapidations which the constitution had suffered, and the invasions which had been committed upon the publick liberties, they may judge of
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of the reality of the danger which is now threatened, when it is even admitted that resources still are left by which it may be opposed. Although the general principle which the honourable gentleman states as the essence of the freedom of the constitution be admitted, it cannot be disputed that it is subject to limitation. At every period since the commencement of those to which we refer for the pure practice of the constitution; in the best and most glorious æras in the history of our government, the principle of extraordinary has been received, not merely for individual expences, but recognized upon general views. It has prevailed under every administration, even those, with which the honourable gentleman was connected; during the three last reigns, and in the most approved periods of liberty and the constitution. The honourable gentleman then holds this principle without exception, while the practice of every government proves that it was always limited, and his whole argument is applicable to all the extraordinary that ever were voted by parliament. It is impossible, therefore, that the honourable gentleman could have correctly stated, I can hardly believe that he has sincerely stated, this argument, which his experience must disavow, and his knowledge must inform him is neither consistent with the principles of the constitution, nor with its practice at periods which deserve to be followed as examples. But though I am here arguing upon general points, the question in reality comes within a narrow compass. The honourable gentleman chuses to overlook in one instance what he alludes to in another part of his speech. Did it never occur to him that parliament had sometimes committed to his majesty, not new, but special powers, which superseded all general questions. In reality this discretionary power is expressly committed to his majesty. Before I sit down, I intend to move that his Majesty's message of the 8th December last year should be read, and likewise the act, granting a vote of credit. From this it will appear that a power was given to his Majesty to apply the sum contained in the vote of credit as the exigencies of the state might require. Suppose the case, which will not be a less suitable illustration, because it approaches the fact, that powers had been conferred to give that assistance to the allies of this country, which our own interest and the circumstances of their situation required, can any man doubt that the minister, who should have hesitated to issue that sum, which, granted, might have enabled our allies to maintain

their own cause, and to defend the safety of Europe, and who should have allowed the enemies of Austria to complete her destruction by withholding a seasonably supply, would have been a traitor to his country, and would have merited the severest punishment. The vote of credit last year does actually invest the executive government with a discretionary power of applying the sums granted in a manner that best might suit the publick exigencies, and the money applied to the service of the Emperor is within the amount of the grant. I do not mean to say that the discretion thus vested in the Crown is absolute and independent of the controul of parliament, or that the minister who exercises it in an improper manner is exempted from censure; but in what manner I understand this limitation, I will state when I am called upon to make my defence. Whatever be the issue of the discussion, I cannot forbear observing, even at the risk of incurring the imputation of arrogance, that I would rather be convicted of having acted a principal part in the measure of granting a supply by which the salvation of Austria was secured, and the independence of Europe was maintained, than be acquitted for withholding that aid, by which the cause of our allies was sacrificed, and the general interests of mankind compromised. At present, however, the question is not, whether the conduct of his Majesty's ministers was proper or improper? Whether they were entitled to praise or deserving of punishment?—The House have now to determine, whether they announce to France that the supplies of the year are to be stopped, and the exertions of the executive power suspended? Whether at a moment of such critical importance we are to be reduced to the unhappy situation when we can neither prosecute the negotiation with that weight which is calculated to ensure a favourable issue, nor prepare for war with an energy which can afford the prospect of success to our exertions?

[The message of the 8th December last year, and the words of the act granting the vote of credit, were read at the table.]

Mr. Fox stated in explanation, that he had only said that extraordinaries were in some measure inevitable, but were an evil that might not be extended beyond the necessity, and that it was criminal to resort to this expedient when other means might be employed.

Sir William Pulteney said, that he, as well as several others, had been very much struck with the manner in which these

these advances had been made to the Emperor, and he had no hesitation in pronouncing it to be highly unconstitutional. The honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) had objected to the general practice of those opposite to him, of representing every measure as fraught with danger, but this argument would not do. It was not enough to say that gentlemen had cried out when there was no danger; when real danger was perceived, it was the duty of the House to attend with care. The essence of the freedom which the constitution secured, was the right of controuling supplies, which the House of Commons possessed. It was true that extraordinaries were necessary, but that general fact did not apply to this particular case. If ministers were to take upon them to dispose of money in this manner the constitution was ruined and gone; the controul of Parliament would be a mere phantom. Surely it never was intended that subsidies to foreign powers should be supplied by a vote of credit. New circumstances might doubtless occur to render it proper for ministers to exercise their discretion, but here the circumstances were foreseen, they even existed, consequently they might have been laid before parliament. The discovery that this sum had been advanced came out in a very suspicious manner indeed. It could no longer be concealed. It came under the head of extraordinaries, and the circumstances could not but be discovered as soon as they were produced. There seemed to have been a desire of concealing the fact as long as possible, and a disclosure was only compelled by necessity. He could not, however, go the length of stopping the supplies, though he was of opinion that a very strong mark of censure ought to be inflicted by the House. The honourable gentleman said that there were qualifications to the general principle, and that ministers were allowed to exercise their discretion. This was no doubt true, and the honourable gentleman himself had exercised this discretion in the case of the Dutch armament in a manner that met his approbation. But there was nothing like it in this case. It was said that the rate of Exchange would have risen had the remittance to the Emperor been known; but still that was no reason for ministers to take upon them to exercise the functions which belonged to parliament. Besides, instead of a bad effect in being known, it would have produced an effect favourable to this country and her allies. It would have raised the spirit of our allies, and discouraged the enemy, who were elated with the prospect that this country was to give no assistance to Austria. He was very glad that the subject had

been brought forward in the way it had been done, and he hoped that the House would never witness in future a similar violation of the principles of the constitution. The immense Navy Debt which had been contracted, in his opinion, proved great mismanagement and want of foresight in that department. It appeared that great abuses prevailed in the transport service; and the House ought seriously to enquire into the causes which had occasioned the shameful prodigality which had been observed, and endeavour to provide a remedy.

Mr. Grey said, Sir, after the truly constitutional speech which I have heard from the honourable baronet, I should not have thought it necessary to have troubled the House with any observations, if I had not conceived myself particularly called upon by some remarks which have fallen from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as to my not having expressed my disapprobation of the measure he last night declared he had adopted. Sir I have often had occasion to apologize to the House for omissions, and I certainly omitted, on the last night, many things which I ought to have stated: but the Chancellor of the Exchequer will do me the justice to refer to what has been my language in the course of the last sessions. He will be obliged to confess that I have repeatedly questioned him on the subject, and that I have asked him, whether he had advanced money to the Emperor of Germany; and I then stated, that if he violated the constitution of the country, by giving money to the Emperor without the consent of parliament being previously obtained, I should certainly bring forward an accusation against him. The honourable gentleman has mentioned that this was not the first, second, or third time, that myself and my honourable friend have stated the constitution to be destroyed; for my own part, I believe it is not confined to the tenth time that the liberties of the country have been invaded by the violence and treachery of ministers. If it had not been the case, and if it did not continue to be the case, we should not, Sir, be now debating the question, whether such a measure, as the minister has adopted, was legal, but we should decide it by bringing him at once to trial and punishment; for, Sir, I assert, if such an act is lawful, then is there no law or constitution in England, of which an Englishman ought to boast. Sir, I cannot conceal my indignation, when I state to you the conduct of the minister during the last parliament with respect to the Austrian subsidy. At the period when I enquired whether any money had been sent

sent to the Emperor, it was a time of temporary embarrassment, when the situation of the country required every attention; at that time, when the minister gave every solemn assurance that no advance had been made to Austria, at that very time there had been nearly the sum of fourteen hundred thousand pounds remitted to the Emperor. Sir, the honourable gentleman has said something about my vigilance on this subject. Without attempting to praise my own endeavours, I hope, I may be allowed to doubt, whether, without that vigilance, we should have ever heard any thing at all from the minister himself. Unless it was his intention to deceive, why did he (if I may so express myself) depart from the usual course of his irregularities? Why take this unusual course? Why conceal from us the sum advanced to the Emperor until we were informed of it, and then only partially and retrospectively, by the right honourable gentleman the preceding day? Why, in short, conceal the army extraordinaries, it not to conceal the taking money out of the pockets of the people? I am aware the right honourable gentleman will rest his defence on the general principle of the army extraordinaries: That he will tell us a case of real exigency is a case that must and ought to supersede the inferior demands of æconomical or even legislative prudence. But let us tell that gentleman, that no financial exigency can be paramount to the constitution; that no duty is so sacred as the maintenance of it. True its most vital parts have been attacked, and their vigour essentially crippled and destroyed. But it is nevertheless incumbent on the real friends of order, to uphold what remains of it, and struggle for the restoration of such of its fundamental, elementary attributes, as have been either subverted or abused. The existence of the constitution in fact depends on the vigilance and attention bestowed by a discerning House of Commons on the acts of ministers. Such a House of Commons will not be satisfied, on great constitutional questions, with pompous declamatory denunciations of the opposers of ministerial arrogance, of the foes of ministerial profusion. It will not be satisfied with retrospective and unconstitutional measures of any kind; but will in every situation evince, by the conduct of its measures, that there still is a barrier to encroachment, a line beyond which, not even his majesty's ministers can extend their predatory efforts. In the present case, it cannot for a moment be argued, that it was not the duty of ministers to come to parliament with a specific proposition, soliciting the advice and concurrence of the representatives of the people, before the money of the
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people was applied, in a way that must subject them to be assessed with new and extraordinary burdens. That the public money was thus applied is evident. That the constitution was infringed is equally so. But the right honourable gentleman will tell us, that granting our principle to be a fundamental principle of the constitution, there yet is an exception to that, as well as to all general rules. He indeed has told us that the sum advanced to the Emperor was advanced under circumstances, and at a time when it was necessary that the exception should be adopted. Thus he takes the exception, and argues from the necessity of the case. We might, in the same way, at once give an unlimited vote of credit to ministers. Perhaps the right honourable gentleman will next tell us, that any account of the disbursement of the army extraordinaries might thus be avoided. So it might. But extraordinaries suited his former principle. There was, however, a time when the right honourable gentleman could have called such an exception, as he has this night adopted, paltry; a time when he was an enthusiast in the cause of liberty, an economist, and a reformer. In the year 1782 this circumstance of extraordinaries would, by the right honourable gentleman, be spoken of and reprobated as an evil which could not be too jealously watched, as an infringement ever to be resisted, as a principle fit only to be destroyed. These avowedly were his sentiments of that species of ministerial chicanery; inasmuch, that immediately after he was made a minister, the House was called upon by a speech from the throne, to watch with jealousy, and repel with dignity every such attempt to dilapidate and infringe the constitution. The extraordinaries being thus formally and solemnly made the subject of a speech from the throne, it is not a little remarkable that the minister himself has adopted the exception, instead of the principle. But, says the honourable gentleman, would a generous nation, a munificent House of Commons, submit a vote of credit to these narrow subdivisions? Would they be so specious and so sinister as to construe it in such a narrow way? It is the right honourable gentleman who has speciously frittered away the laws, who has attempted by a sort of special pleading, to deprive us of our liberties. A certain sum under the authority of an act of parliament was given to his Majesty for the service of the year 1796. The application of the sum was restricted to certain purposes. It was to be applied in such a way as the exigencies of affairs might require, but it was meant prospectively, not retrospectively. I can
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prove to the House that the sum then granted has been used retrospectively, instead of prospectively. On the 31st of December, 1795, 150,000*l.* was given to Col. Craufurd. Thus the vote of credit granted to His Majesty in 1796 had had a retrospective operation. It evidently went to liquidate the sum. I am certain the honourable gentleman is abstractedly of opinion, that any approbation, such as he has made of that vote of credit, is an unconstitutional approbation. But the honourable gentleman could not defend himself on the vote of credit. Nor indeed I think, that the last parliament servile and obsequious as it was, that parliament, which took more from the liberties of the people than any 'parliament ever existed; No! that parliament could not have intended, could not have considered that vote of credit as conveying unlimited power to ministers. Many and monstrous have been the acts which the present ministers have performed, in direct repugnance of the constitution, in open violation of its spirit and of its laws; but none of their acts went so directly to destroy the constitution as this act. But, says the honourable gentleman, will you fetter the hands of government? Will you evince to the enemy a want of reliance in the wisdom and prudence of the executive? Will you proclaim to Europe, that the parliament of Great Britain sits in solemn majesty only to deliberate on a necessary subsidy, only to discuss a measure of exigency, when a negotiation is pending, when our national dignity ought to be asserted and maintained? He will tell us that the enemy would be likely to take advantage of our jealousy, and apportion the extent of their demands to our apparent necessities. But, Sir, it would not be a sign of our poverty, but of our prudence, to weigh well every measure, to consider, seriously, every act that has for its object the taking the people's money. The enemy we have to deal with is a discerning and vigilant enemy; an enemy that discusses openly every publick topic; an enemy, that instead of rejoicing at seeing the British House of Commons servile, must rejoice to see it resolute in the defence of his own privileges, because such a spirit, and such conduct, would be to them the best pledges and the best security of amity and peace. However, the right honourable gentleman has already admitted, that the enemy is not altogether unworthy of his esteem. He has recognized the ferocious enemies of religion, of morality, of civil liberty, and of crowns. He has at length found that they are capable of maintaining the relations of peace
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and amity; that after "snorting away the indigested fumes of the blood of their Sovereign," he may safely admit them to the audience chamber of kings. Presently we shall have to behold the ambassadors of consecrated men, shaking hands with the right honourable gentleman. But these fraternizing events are, if the honourable gentleman's doubts be at all well founded, somewhat distant. Were they less the subjects of uncertainty; were the negotiation more likely to be speedily and happily concluded than has been stated, what, let me ask, can be fairly objected to the proposal of my honourable friend? The question at present is, whether the better way would not be to negative the second reading of the resolutions of the committee, and thus withhold from the minister the supplies for the current year. And, however, I may be disposed to give this proposition a different application, the negative of my honourable friend cannot possibly prevent, but rather by its constitutional operation, give ultimate stability to the war, and occasion its being conducted, in case of necessity for continuing it, with increased spirit. It was not to place this spirit at any distance, nor to palsy its operations, that my honourable friend avowed his intention to negative the second reading of the resolutions now before the committee. It was that the redress of grievances might precede supplies. But as I, Sir, think that the postponement till the next day of the second reading of these resolutions will be attended with equally salutary effects, I feel no difficulty in proposing that delay. A delay till the next day will afford gentlemen an opportunity of maturely reflecting on the speech of the right honourable Chancellor of the Exchequer; of considering how, and at what time the ministers of the crown can be most certainly, and most effectually punished for their violation of the constitution and the laws. If this House assert the liberties of the people, it will punish ministers, but such punishment to be apportioned to the crime, will most undoubtedly require sober and serious consideration. I therefore move, that the resolutions of the committee of the ways and means be read a second time to-morrow, and before they are read, I pledge myself to move the impeachment of the minister.

Mr. *Wilberforce* said, feeling, Sir, of how much importance it is always to proceed on publick questions with caution, and investigate them with temper, I shall not upon this occasion follow the honourable member, who has just sat down, in the same track of warm and passionate declamation. It were

were, indeed, extremely unwise to attempt it, because, in the high wanderings of passion, the honourable gentleman evidently abandoned reason. He has moved, Sir, to put off till next day the second reading of the resolutions of the committee of ways and means; and truly Sir, when I recollect how essentially the sentiments of gentlemen on his side of the House vary in the course of twenty four hours, it might not be altogether impolitic to grant them the delay they have required. Last night, in the heat of an infuriated harangue, we did not hear one word of the unconstitutionality of that measure, which is now so much the subject of their disapprobation. Last night the honourable gentleman thought he discharged his duty to his constituents and the country, by passing over in silence an act which we are this night told has palpably infringed the constitution. Why the right honourable gentleman opposite to me neglected his duty to his constituents, whether it was a wanton or an undesigned neglect, I pretend not to say; but undoubtedly were their charge against ministers of any other nature than one for high crimes and misdemeanors, I should not be at all adverse to the honourable gentleman's proposed delay. That delay I should, in such a case, agree to, because I should expect that in another twenty-four hours their severity would be changed into moderation, and their censure to applause. Notwithstanding every received opinion, I must express unequivocally, that the impressions myself have received of the transaction of a supply to the Emperor have been very different indeed from those the honourable gentleman seems to entertain. On this subject the honourable gentleman as I have already observed, has this night favoured us with effusions of his amended judgment. Last night he thought proper to sit down and quit the transaction, without any remark at all. Sir, before I say the few words with which I propose to trouble the House on this subject, I think it right to remark, that I do not expect any candour from the opposite side of the House. They have uniformly inveighed against ministers with as little candour as moderation, with as little sincerity as truth. From such men, Sir, it were folly to expect candour; but from the honourable baronet, as a friend, I had reason to expect both candour and a different sort of language. I have even experienced it. But, Sir, I shall reserve any farther observations on this subject till a future and more apposite opportunity. Of the vote of credit upon which gentlemen have commented so very generally, I confess my sentiments differ altogether from

those avowed by the honourable gentleman opposite to me. Upon perusal of that vote of credit, it occurred to me, that his Majesty's ministers might apply any part of it to the exigencies of the government. Whether the situation of the Emperor really required the assistance afforded him by ministers, ministers alone were competent to judge; but could I for one moment suppose it was proved to my satisfaction that ministers lightly and wantonly disposed of the sum granted to his Majesty by that vote of credit, I should not be one of the last to blame them. To this subject, the question of the propriety or impropriety of the Imperial loan of three millions, my attention has not been more directed, than that of any other publick man. It ought, however, to be recollected that it was at all events necessary to assist his Imperial majesty. Those who saw this necessity in all its causes and consequences, are alone able to say whether it was necessary to assist him to that amount. Whether the transaction was better and more safely done in private than it could be performed in publick, was a quite distinct question. And undoubtedly I think, that considering the then state of publick affairs, as well as the then state of publick credit, it was not a transaction to which prudence would have attached notoriety. In cases of such a nature, ministers ought always to proceed with caution, lest, by the developement of transactions which, in their direct and immediate consequences, must necessarily affect the funds, publick credit should be injured. In a generous country, in the parliament of a generous nation, it will not surely be made the subject of censure, to have saved, by our good faith, the Germanick empire. Those who wished well to the country must have been solicitous for the success of its ally, must have well known that that ally could not carry on the war without the assistance of this country. Undoubtedly the question of expediency still recurs. We have still to enquire how far the sum advanced was proportioned to the necessity that demanded it. That my right honourable friend, in making the advance, acted under peculiarly embarrassed circumstances, is evident. The Emperor must have been at the time on the verge of a great precipice, and all Europe in danger of being ruined and disorganized by his fall. From the circumstances, therefore, under which that supply was given to his Imperial Majesty, it must be obvious to every unprejudiced mind, that my right honourable friend had no intention to injure the constitution. To the present supply itself we had much of good to ascribe; to it might in some degree,

degree, be attributed the good reception Lord Malmesbury met from the Directory of France. Every symptom of weakness on our part would have proved an obstacle to the success of the pending negotiation. And who, acquainted with publick affairs, will pretend to say, that our credit would not be worse, had that transaction been publickly known at the moment of its completion? The speeches of the honourable gentleman opposite may do well enough to inflame our domestic and embolden our foreign enemies, but on the minds of a sober House of Commons they can have no such effect. The impeachment of ministers is a favourite topic with some people, but in this instance they have not deserved censure, but praise. Gentlemen may rant about the excellencies, the wounds, and the death of the constitution; but they ought to know that those to whom they address their medley effusions, are more sincerely the supporters of freedom than they. Upon the whole, I think it my duty to give my negative to the honourable gentleman's motion..

Mr. Yorke, said he thought the present question the most important of any he had ever heard discussed since he had had the honour of a seat in parliament. He wished that gentlemen, however, would discuss it with temper; sure if ever there was a time since the revolution, when partial affections and party interests ought to be abandoned, the present was, he said, that time. An honourable gentleman had been lavish of reproach upon the last parliament; he supposed it was perfectly consistent with the rules of the House, for one parliament to abuse another; but as a member of that parliament, he conceived he had a right, in vindication of himself, to say, that however servile and obsequious that parliament might be called, he did not know that he had shewn more servility, or betrayed a greater want of proper spirit when it was necessary to do otherwise, than any member of the present parliament. To revert to the subject, however, more immediately under consideration, he had to remark, that the gentlemen, who had spoken upon it, appeared to him in general to have departed from the question. The question before the House was merely whether the resolutions of the committee of ways and means should be agreed to by the House, for the assistance given to the Emperor was out of a sum of money granted by a vote of credit to defray any extraordinary expences of the army that might accrue; and as the extraordinaries of the army were not yet voted, it was consequently a separate consideration. Yet an honourable gentleman had proposed to

negative this question, on the principle that the money granted by the vote of credit in a former year was misapplied, and thereby postpone the supplies necessary for the service of the present year. Such delay in the provision of the supplies he conceived might be of dangerous consequence, for gentlemen were to recollect that we were in the middle of a dangerous war, and at the most critical period of the most critical negotiation. He should propose, therefore, to have the resolutions of the committee of ways and means immediately received, for it was certainly important that the money should be granted as soon as possible. The other question, respecting the application of the money granted by the vote of credit, might deserve consideration when it came to be discussed separately, and that was all he wished. In regard to his opinion of the application of the money granted by the vote of credit, he knew no law nor precedent why a part of it should not be sent to the Emperor, any more than why it should not be sent to St. Domingo or Toulon, if the exigency of the case required. The question then to be considered was, whether the exigency of the circumstances did require it, and upon that he entertained no doubt whatever. The honourable gentleman had proposed to postpone reading of the resolutions till next day, that he might previously bring forward a specific accusation against the minister for the misapplication of the vote of credit. Now although he did not wish to have the reading of the resolutions postponed, as in his opinion they by no means interfered with the other question, he certainly hoped that the honourable gentleman would be as good as his word in bringing forward his specific accusation, that the House might determine as speedily as possible whether the minister was justifiable in his application of the vote of credit, and whether the exigency of the circumstances did actually require such an expediture. It appeared to him that the minister was justifiable, from a view of our relative situation at that period, and that instead of reprobation he deserved commendation. And it appeared moreover to him that we were indebted to the minister by his timely, prudent and cautious assistance, for the deliverance of Germany from France, and the happy change in the political affairs of Europe; and that he might exclaim in the manner of Scipio "I have saved Germany and all Europe."

Mr. Harrison said, the minister had been in possession of frequent opportunities between the granting of the vote of credit and his assistance to the Emperor, to come before parliament

parliament and ask them, whether it was prudent and right to render that assistance. That we were to fritter away the constitution for a pitiful idea of a temporary rise in the price of stocks, appeared to him a subject of very serious import. He had long watched the conduct of the minister, and had long discovered him to have adopted a uniform system of rendering that House a nullity in the constitution of Great Britain. He set out with reforms, which whether they were self-interested or impartial, was not then to be examined, and he had extended those reforms to give the minister an arbitrary power, and prescribe the privileges of the crown. He was at present endeavouring to find out new channels for his prerogative, and in the application of the money granted for the extraordinaries of the army was acting with the same intention as when he began to order barracks to be built, and afterwards came to parliament for money to complete them. And here he must remark the shameless profligacy in the squandering of the publick money upon those buildings, for a sum of 575,000*l.* appeared in the account of the extraordinaries upon the table, not for erecting barracks, but repairing them and for beer; and the other day as he was passing on the great north road, about a mile from Stilton, and five miles from Peterborough, he beheld an hundred men working close together, in erecting barracks for ten thousand men, and forty acres of ground he understood were purchased for that purpose. So great was the profusion and expence, that these barracks he apprehended were not built by contract or estimate, but in a random way, and the men employed to build them were not only so numerous as to be in each other's way, but had spent all their mornings in idleness at the public-house, till a superintendant went down lately to controul them. After the holidays he said he intended to bring forward a motion to take into consideration the state of the public expenditure, and decide in what way a saving can be made. In the mean time he approved the motion of his honourable friend, and concurred in the amendment.

Mr. Wilberforce explained, that he did not consider the publick knowledge of the assistance given to the Emperor as affecting the 3 *per cents.* merely, but as productive of more fatal consequences.

Mr. Curwen declared he thought the question under consideration the greatest in its consequences that he had ever heard discussed. It was not merely that 1,400,000*l.* which had been granted to the Emperor, nor the safety of
Germany

Germany, which made it so important, but it was the safety of the British constitution. The commons were always considered as the guardians of the public purse, and in that view this question was more important to them than if the threatened invasion were absolutely put in execution, and the invaders at our doors. On the decision of that night depended the resistance and energy of that branch of the state in future. Possibly the assistance to the Emperor had saved Germany; but as the minister had repeated opportunities, he might have pleaded some necessity to parliament for granting that assistance, or he might have since applied for a Bill of indemnity. He would not enter into the discussion of the policy of the measure, nor did he believe with some gentlemen that acts of parliament contain something unseen in their construction. When this vote of credit passed, he expressed some doubts of its application, and apprehended that money might be expended without the authority of parliament: and he was the more tenacious on this subject, because he was aware how easy it would be by the continuation of such practices to make it vague and useless. What were the 500 Members of that House, when you take away their dignity as a body? By removing the dignity you destroy the body. He declared to God, that he should have no respect whatever in future for that House, if they suffered the motion of his honourable friend to be defeated. An honourable gentleman opposite, had talked of the candour with which a delinquent should be treated by his friend: but he was of a different opinion, he never could shut his mouth against abuses, and if any friend of his was guilty of a flagrant delinquency, he should blame him more severely than an indifferent person for whom he had no feeling, by such practices as these the people had uniformly been robbed of their best rights. But he would say something for the right honourable gentleman who assumed so much for the privileges of the crown, and that was, that he wished he had advised his Majesty to make some sacrifice for the security of his dominions, in conjunction with his people, for the time may come, when the public spirit of a monarch shall avail him more than all the glitter and parade of tinsel and of pomp. When people were rapidly descending to a state they were not born to, in consequence of the heavy imposts they were forced to pay for the protection of the state, it would not disgrace the sovereign to allot a portion of his wealth for their relief.

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The *Master of the Rolls* declared, he could not well say, whether in the course of his parliamentary experience he had ever assisted at a debate on a subject of a nature so delicate and important as that which was then agitating in the House. In the opinions of some, it ought to supercede the discussion of every other subject, however momentous, even that of voting the supplies; while others seemed to require that ministers should have come down to the House for an act of indemnity to screen them from the consequences of the unconstitutional measure, which they are accused of having adopted, without the consent of parliament. To neither of these opinions did he incline; not even to the latter: nor did the present question call on him to pronounce on these points. In general, he thought the second thoughts of the gentlemen opposite him much better than their first; but on this occasion, he must regard their first thoughts as preferable to their second. The preceding night, among all the arguments they had adduced, none were pointed to the subject at that moment in agitation; neither could he conceive what had put it in their heads to stir the question they had now started; ministers were as criminal and guilty the preceding night as at that moment; but even supposing them thus guilty, could not gentlemen permit the present business to go on even one stage more, without supposing themselves precluded from bringing forward at a future period the investigation they seemed so eager to institute.—The question now was, whether they were to agree to the report of the ways and means that were to meet the debts they had incurred; though this were disposed of, would no other opportunity occur of agitating the other question, or did they intend to say no more on the business of the preceding night? Might not, in either supposition, the vote precede that agitation? Surely, abundant opportunities would offer of bringing it before the House, and if it be of that importance it is said to be, ought it not to be brought forward directly and distinctly, and not collaterally, and involved in a business with which it had no connection? This would be far from consulting the dignity which ought to prevail in such a discussion—at present the learned gentleman was not, he said, prepared to decide on the question, whether the conduct of the minister should be imputed to him as a crime or not.—It was not the question that now awaited our decision, and he wished that no gentleman would answer what might be farther offered on the occasion; for his part, he was not obliged to stay, nor
would

would he permit himself to be convinced by the arguments that were urged on the other side.

Mr. *W. Smith* said, that after such superior abilities had been exerted on the present question, it might appear presumptuous in him to offer any opinion on it. He would therefore trouble the House but on a very few points, and particularly with respect to the want of connection which is said to appear between the two questions—in his opinion, they were by no means disconnected. For if the present question be of such importance as to dismiss the consideration of another subject, he thought one day's delay could be productive of no inconvenience, and that no later than the next day the point might be established. He professed much veneration for the opinion of his hon. friend (Mr. Wilberforce) nor would he dare to enter the lists in argument with him, unless he contended not for truth, but victory.—That hon. gentleman laid much stress on his argument, deduced from the words of the vote of credit last year, viz. that ministers are authorised to adopt such measures as the exigencies of the state might require. But the same words are to be found in the vote of credit for the Prussian subsidy, yet they cannot be said to have conferred the power now allotted to them, unless they be supposed to contain some secret meaning to answer the intentions of ministers. In the vote of credit for 1794, we meet with the same expressions, and will it be said that they were introduced with a reference to such a measure? If so, then they were employed to misguide, for the public were imposed on by words which they could not so understand. Besides, the amount of both votes of credit being nearly the same, or exactly the same, it can scarce have any reference but to a similar measure to that of the preceding year; for the right hon. gentleman must recollect, that the vote of credit last year was 2,500,000*l*. Mr. Smith concluded by saying, that the delay of one day in the business of the supplies, could not be a sufficient reason for opposing a question that now seemed to call for immediate investigation.

Lord *Hawkebury* considered the present question of such serious importance, that in his opinion it ought to be brought forward in a direct manner, and met fairly. But he did not conceive that it was then properly before the House; for the vote of credit, to which it belonged, was not at that time under discussion. There was no question but of the supply, which involved the consideration in no respect whatever, and the House should proceed as soon as possible

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to adopt the resolutions before them, without even the appearance of delay. All must agree, that during a war so perilous as the present, and pending the most critical negotiation that could be entered on, the serious business of the supplies should not be postponed; on the contrary, they should meet with no obstacle or difficulty, and on an occasion, and under circumstances like the present, they should be agreed to, without even the appearance of partial dissent. With regard to the other question, in his mind, it would be better discussed after some interval of cool consideration, that it might afterwards be brought on with due solemnity, and discussed with that fairness, temper, and moderation, which its own dignity and importance must necessarily claim.

Mr. Fox, in reply, said, he certainly thought with the learned gentleman, that the House should understand the nature of the question before them. The learned gentleman affirms, that suppose the House negative the question, and agree to the second reading of the resolutions of supply, it will not prevent any member of the House from bringing forward a motion on the subject at another period. But the best mode of proceeding would be to follow the good old constitutional practice of our ancestors, and to insist on a redress of grievances before we vote supplies, and the grievance at present complained of is of sufficient magnitude to justify delay. But, says the noble lord (Hawkesbury) it is a question of *appearance* merely. This is all that is necessary to justify the House on entering into the discussion, and discussion is all that is now required. If there be an appearance that ministers have made an enormous infraction in the constitution, what better ground can be imagined for delaying the supplies till the grievance is investigated and redressed. We are now, said Mr. Fox, reproached with not having felt this grievance last night. We did feel it; but in the multitude of objects then brought under consideration, it was not judged expedient to urge the censure at that time which the measure deserved. Admitting, however, that I did not feel it; admitting that I neglected my duty, is that a reason why I should ever continue equally unfeeling and negligent? Because I let one opportunity slip, am I never after to act as reflection dictates? But if I have neglected my duty, I ask pardon of the House and of my Constituents, and in doing so, like all others who ask pardon, I hope I may be suffered to amend my faults. The Honourable Gentleman (Mr. York) has said, be

cause we contended the two Bills passed last year destroyed the constitution, our assertion respecting the present measure must be a lie. I have thought not only this, but many former measures of ministers, destructive of the constitution. The traitorous Correspondence Bill and the Alien Bill gave it a blow; the suspension of the Habeas Corpus gave it another blow; the two Bills passed last session gave it another still more severe blow; because they prevented the people from assembling to give their opinion on such measures as this, a measure which is in itself a proof still more striking of the destruction of the constitution. If last year, when those Bills were in discussion, he had told the House that one of the evil consequences of them would be the measure now in question; if last year he had said, that in consequence of passing those Bills, the minister would come then, and tell parliament he had disposed of money to the Emperor without its consent or knowledge, he would have been accused of delivering an inflammatory declamation. But the improbability must be obvious to every gentleman of any minister's daring to make such an infraction on the constitution as the present, if the people were allowed to give their opinion on it. Those Bills therefore had destroyed the constitution, because they had enabled ministers to pursue such unconstitutional measures as the present. He thought with his honourable friend, Mr. Curwen, that if such proceedings were tolerated, the constitution would not be worth contending for. With regard to the defence of this question, that the sum was all included in the vote of credit; that the vote of credit was not exceeded; this was no justification, and he quoted former practices in support of this assertion.

Mr. Fox desired that the message from the King to the House, in April 1794, might be read. This message announced the proposal of subsidizing Prussia, in conjunction with Holland. He proceeded to argue, that on former occasions, any assistance given to foreign powers had been previously stated to the House. The whole of the sum given to the Emperor, except 70,000*l.* had been issued, while parliament was sitting last session, ministers asserting at the same time that they had no intention of assisting the Emperor. But they say it was a matter of difficulty how to act at that time; it might be injurious to the credit of the country to announce their intention. If it was a matter of difficulty, that was the very reason why they should have consulted parliament, as it must be allowed, that parliament was wiser than ministers. But this doctrine is new and alarming. The credit of the country,

try, it seems, is to be kept up by fraud and concealment, and the constitution is to be destroyed for the purpose of keeping up the price of the funds. The real point of the question, said Mr. Fox, is, whether the conduct of the right hon. gentleman, with regard to this money sent to the Emperor is or is not an infraction on the constitution? If it is allowed to be an infraction, which I think no person who has considered or understands the constitution can deny; then I contend that it is one of the most violent infractions that can be made on it. It is no less than an actual usurpation of the powers of the representatives of the people, in the most important of all their privileges, that of granting money. If the House of Commons tamely suffers that right to be wrested from it, there will no longer be any occasion for it. It may as well be annihilated. I have been much surprised to hear the arguments which have been held forth this night, by way of excusing this criminal transaction. Arguments indeed, most of which militate against their own principles, and in fact destroy themselves. One honourable gentleman has said, that if this measure of sending the money to the Emperor had been known at the time it was so sent, it would in all probability have had a great effect on, and considerably injured, the credit of the funds. Supposing this to be the case, it is no excuse at all. The constitution of the country is of too high a value to be even tampered with, much less overturned, in order to prevent any temporary injury or depression of the public credit. But, Sir, so far from this being the case, I am conscious and certain, that the unconstitutional measure alluded to is of such a nature, that it is more likely to injure public credit, than any discovery that could have been made, that money was to be sent to the Emperor in a legal, open, and constitutional manner. Publicity, and open dealing, it is too well known, are the best props and support of credit. If the public conceive that their money cannot be taken away from them, or sent away into foreign countries, but by their own consent given through the medium of their own representatives, the House of Commons, they will always have a certainty that no measures of that kind can be resorted to or adopted without their knowledge, for it cannot be done but by a public act in the face of the world. If, on the contrary, such measures, as that alluded to, are to take place, and the crown, or its servants, are permitted either to raise money, or to dispose of the money, when raised for other purposes, for that of accommodating or lending to any foreign Prince,

for

for the purpose of carrying on war, without the consent of Parliament, then, I say, there is a great reason to suppose that suspicions very injurious to the credit of the funds might creep into the minds of the public. They might then very naturally say, we may suppose there is so much money in the nation as it is presumed there is, but what security have we that it is really and *bona fide* the case? The minister can dispose of it when and as often, and in such sums as he thinks proper, without check or controul, and how can we tell how far he may go? In the case of a grant by Parliament no such thing can happen, not a shilling can be voted without being known. The securing therefore the power of the House of Commons over the public purse is the best and strongest safeguard of the credit of the country. There is besides one circumstance which strongly aggravates this bold and daring invasion of the privileges of the House of Commons. There was no exigence whatever to require it. The money was not sent away all at once to answer any particular and pressing demand or necessity; it was sent deliberately, at different periods, before or between any of which the minister had it in his power to have called parliament together to have consulted them, and if they thought proper to have lent the money in a constitutional way. Instead of this, Parliament had never been consulted; part of it had even been sent away since it had met, without the least intimation on that head. Even supposing there had been any exigence, as parliament were sitting, could that exigence have been the least injured or hurt by an application to it, either for a Bill of indemnity, or for its sanction? The right honourable gentleman had those around him, who knew very well how to palliate whatever might come from him, and how to appreciate any thing that might be said against him. This was observable in the remarks which an honourable gentleman had made on what had fallen from an honourable baronet on the subject. The honourable gentleman seemed to know perfectly well with what degree of civility, humility, or servility, it was necessary to speak of the measures of ministers. I do not know what language it will be necessary for me and my friends to use, when speaking of the constitution, or any thing else. If we speak of an invasion, he says what have you to say about an invasion? We know very well that you are in opposition, that you look for the downfall of the minister; an invasion would be likely to affect this, and, therefore, to a certain degree, you would not be against an invasion. If we speak of the

constitution—what have you to say to the constitution? You are in opposition to us; we know you don't like it. I am looked upon as one of the incorrigible Jacobins, and as such, can have no right to talk of the constitution. I protest I see no way in which we shall be able to conduct ourselves. I think the right honourable gentleman had better come to the point at once, and fairly bring in a Bill to exclude all who are in opposition to him, from the House. At present, however, being in this House, I shall certainly use the right of speaking freely on every subject that comes before me. I know that I was born free; that I am determined to die free. I look upon myself as the representative of a free people. I know I have a right as such to the freedom of debate, and I will certainly make use of that right so long as I am permitted to sit here. I now speak to a measure, which is a daring and violent attack on one of the most important and dearest privileges of the House of Commons. I hope, in the present instance, the supplies will not be agreed to, till the infraction I speak of is inquired into, and redressed by some means adequate to the occasion. It behoves the House to watch and guard its rights and privileges; if it does not, the constitution will very soon be no more.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* expressed his determination, under the circumstances of the present moment, to press the measure of immediately voting the supplies, without allowing himself to be diverted to any extraneous subject of discussion. He at the same time declared himself ready to meet the discussion respecting the grants of money to the Emperor, whenever a specific day should be appointed for the purpose.

Mr. *Bastard* declared, that he would vote for immediately going into the supplies. Yet he felt himself called on to state that he did not approve of the measure pursued with respect to the loan made to the Emperor, and he trusted that the sense of the House would be so expensive on that occasion, as to prevent, at any future time, a repetition of a similar conduct.

The House divided on the question, that the word "tomorrow" be inserted instead of "now,"

<i>Ayes</i>	-	-	-	-	-	58
<i>Noes</i>	-	-	-	-	-	164
<i>Majority</i>						106

The original question was then put and carried, The resolutions were read a second time and agreed to. A short conversation

conversation took place between Mr. *Bryan Edwards*, Mr. *Sewel*, the *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, &c, after which the House adjourned,

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, Dec. 9.

Some private Bills were brought up from the Commons, and read a first time.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, Dec. 9.

WET DOCKS.

Mr. *Manning* brought up the London Wet Dock Bill, which was read a first time.

Mr. *Manning* said, that as a Bill had been introduced into the last parliament which explained the object of the present Bill, and as the report of the committee which had been appointed to examine the subject, presented such ample elucidations, he did not conceive it necessary to trouble the House with any particular details. Still, however, there were some circumstances which had come to his knowledge connected with the object of the Bill, and illustrative of the grievances which it was intended to remove, of which he begged leave to take notice. From the inadequate accommodations which the merchants of the city of London had for its increased commerce, their property on board the ships in the river were liable to very great depredations. He had been informed from the best authority, that these depredations continued to a very great and alarming height. By an act of parliament, passed sometime ago, called the Bumboat act, a power was given to stop any boats upon the river loaded with goods of which a proper account could not be given to the magistrates by the persons conveying them. He was informed that at the office, at Shadwell, out of 342 persons convicted of the offence, more than one hundred had paid the penalty of 40*l.* which the act of parliament imposed, and had been again let loose to commit similar depredations. A considerable number, though no doubt considerably less, had been convicted at the office in Whitechapel, and had been liberated in the same proportion. This shewed that the act passed on the subject was not adequate, and that some-

something more was necessary to guard against the evil. This it was the object of the Bill to effect by removing the temptation and the opportunity of the crime. As the Bill now read a first time, however, involved such a variety of interests, it was not his intention to hurry it through the House without allowing every party to be heard, and every objection to be obviated. He, therefore, meant to have the Bill read a second time after the Christmas recess, and at present only moved that it be read a second time.

Mr. Alderman *Anderson* said, he was glad the second reading was put off. The Bill, in its present shape, would ruin a great many persons, whose interests were not to be neglected. He had the satisfaction to say, that the plan which the city of London had been engaged in drawing up was completed, and would be submitted to the House immediately after the Christmas recess, and he hoped that it would be found to combine such an attention to the property of individuals with the public accommodation as would merit the approbation of the House.

CALL OF THE HOUSE.

Colonel *Porter* gave notice, that, as he understood that business of great importance was expected to occur, he should move that House be called over on Tuesday next.

The estimates of the Navy Debt were ordered to be printed for the use of the members.

TRENT AND MERSEY CANAL.

Upon a motion for hearing counsel on the part of the petitioners against this Bill, the House divided,

<i>Ayes</i>	-	-	-	-	-	28
<i>Noes</i>	-	-	-	-	-	93
<i>Majority</i>	-					61

Colonel *Grosvenor*, after stating that the enormous reservoir, proposed to be made, was calculated to monopolize all the water in the country, for the purpose of preventing the execution of any other scheme, however beneficial it might be to the trade and commerce of the country, expressed his opinion that the House was not justifiable in refusing to hear evidence in support of the allegations advanced in the different petitions presented against the Bill, and calculated to substantiate the merits of a case, no other opportunity of proving which had occurred.

The *Speaker* told the honourable member, that it was not allow-

allowable to arraign the conduct of the House, which had already determined, that counsel should not be heard.

Mr. *W. Dundas* spoke in support of the Bill, and stated that although the reservoir in question would occupy ten miles square of ground, yet it was to be presumed, that it would be of public utility, until the contrary should be proved.

Mr. *Martin* said, that though he was a friend to canals in general, he must vote against the present Bill, from the conviction that its object was to defeat another scheme, pregnant with the most beneficial consequences to the commerce of the country in general, and to Staffordshire potteries in particular.

Sir *W. Pulteney* expressed his approbation of the principle of the Bill; but remarked, that when any company of proprietors came to parliament to request a favour, parliament ought to require that they should be just to others. If he had been rightly informed, the Trent and Mersey Company refused to open a communication with different mines and manufactories in the vicinity of their canal, and by that means, did a considerable injury to the public. This kind of conduct might succeed for a time, but it would not be long tolerated in a commercial country.

General *Egerton*, in reply, observed that no proposal for a communication with mines, &c. had ever been refused; and that the Trent and Mersey Canal Company were always ready to accommodate the country by admitting every communication that was practicable.

The Bill was ordered to be engrossed.

Mr. *Rose* brought up the Loan Bill, which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Monday.

The Bill for granting an additional duty on certain exciseable articles, Auctions, Coffee, British Spirits, &c. was brought up, read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Monday.

The Bill for granting certain additional duties on Scotch Distilleries, was brought in and read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Monday.

A Bill for granting certain additional duties on Custom Goods, was brought up and read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Monday.

Adjourned till Monday.

HOUSE

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, Dec. 12.

The Earl of *Asburnham* and the Bishop of *Litchfield* took the oaths and their seats.

The Bills on the table (all private ones) were severally read in their respective stages.

The Dudley Canal Bill was brought up from the House of Commons, and read a first time.

SCOTS APPEAL.

Their Lordships heard the *Attorney General*, as counsel for the appellant in the Scots appeal—John Pringle, of St. Clement's Wells, against Janet Dove, and Jane Dove, Executrices and Residuary Legatees of Elizabeth Todd, deceased. After which, they postponed the further hearing of the case.

WAR WITH SPAIN.

Lord *Grenville* presented the following message from the King.

GEORGE, R.

His Majesty is concerned to acquaint the House of Lords that his endeavours to preserve peace with Spain, and to adjust all matters in discussion with that Court by an amicable negotiation, have been rendered ineffectual by an abrupt and unprovoked Declaration of War on the part of the Catholic King.

His Majesty, at the same time that he sincerely laments this addition to the calamities of war already extending over so great a part of Europe, has the satisfaction to reflect that nothing has been omitted on his part which could contribute to the maintenance of peace on grounds consistent with the honour of his crown, and the interests of his dominions.

And he trusts, that under the protection of Divine Providence, the firmness and wisdom of his parliament will enable him effectually to repel this unprovoked aggression, and to afford to all Europe an additional proof of the spirit and resources of the British Nation,

G. R.

Which having been read by the clerk,

Lord *Grenville* moved, that his Majesty's most gracious message be taken into consideration the next day; which was accordingly ordered.

Lord *Grenville* then moved, that the Declaration of War of the Court of Madrid against Great Britain, and that the

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Answer

Answer to that declaration be laid before the House. Ordered.

Their Lordships were ordered to be summoned the next day.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, Dec. 12.

MILBORNE-PORT ELECTION.

The *Chairman* brought up the report of the committee appointed to try the merits of the petition against the election for Milborne-port, confirming the election, but declaring the petition to be neither frivolous nor vexatious.

The *Chairman* of the committee appointed to try the merits of the election for the borough of Leominster, delivered in the report, by which the election is confirmed, but the petition declared to be neither frivolous nor vexatious.

The *Secretary at War* gave notice, that on Thursday next he would move for leave to bring in an amended Bill for the augmentation of the militia.

The Loan Bill, the Excise Duty Bill, the Scots Distillery Bill, and the Custom Duty Bill, were each read a second time.

Mr. *Biddulph* moved for some financial papers relative to the East India Company, which were ordered to be made out.

MILITARY INTERFERENCE.

Mr. *Jekyl* said, if ever there was a period more than another in which watchfulness was the duty of every member of parliament, it was the present. The subject which he was about to mention, he introduced with the greater readiness, because he saw the right honourable Secretary at War in his place. He believed that a letter, signed M. Wodhall, to the Earl of Northampton, Lord Lieutenant of the county of Northampton, had met the eye of most gentlemen in the diurnal prints. Mr. *Jekyl* read the letter as follows,

NEW MILITIA ACT.

TO THE EARL OF NORTHAMPTON, LORD LIEUTENANT OF THE COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON.

" MY LORD,

" On going yesterday to the first meeting for Brackley division, under the new Militia Act, I observed a troop of cavalry parading before the inn; two Justices and

two

two other Deputy Lieutenants were there, and just proceeding to business; they all assured me that the military did not attend in consequence of any application from them; but that the commanding officer produced orders from the War Office signed by one of Mr. Windham's clerks. No riot or disturbance whatever had taken place, and the numerous constables appeared fully competent to the preservation of the peace; the soldiers, however, continued to obstruct our door during the whole day and on my remarking the delay which arose from one of the constables not calling the appellants from his parish, and bringing them into the room, he excused himself by saying the soldiers would not suffer them to enter the house.

"Under this newly adopted system of military government, it is highly incompatible with my principles to act any longer as a Deputy Lieutenant. Being unacquainted with your Lordship's town residence, I take the liberty of requesting Mr. Markham to fill up the direction, and to forward this letter by the post, and to keep the deputation, which I received 28 years ago from Lord Halifax, till he has an opportunity of delivering it.

"I am my Lord,

"Your Lordship's most obedient and

"Most humble servant,

"M. WODHALL."

Thenford, near Bunbury.

Dec. 3, 1796.

Mr. Jekyl wished for some explanation of the subject from the Secretary at War, which, if he did not obtain, he said he would bring the matter before the House in a regular shape.

The *Secretary at War* replied, that he had waited with anxiety to hear the charge which the honourable gentleman had to bring against him, and he was very much surprised when he found it to be grounded upon a circumstance which he never had heard of till that moment. It was impossible for him to give him any satisfaction upon the subject, but he should make enquiry, under a firm persuasion, however, that no orders had issued from his office which were not called for by the circumstances of the case. He recollected last session to have heard a formal complaint made by a noble lord (Lord William Russell,) respecting the interference of the military on a certain occasion, and when he came to enquire into the matter, he found the circumstances to have been entirely misrepresented, and that the military had conducted themselves with most perfect propriety.

The Bill for securing more effectually the duties on Bonds, Leases, and other legal instruments, was brought in and read a first time.

HIS

HIS MAJESTY'S MESSAGE.

Mr. Secretary *Dundas* brought down a message from the King upon the Declaration of War of the Court of Madrid against Great Britain; which being read by Mr. Hatsel, and being the same in substance with that sent to the House of Lords,

Mr. Secretary *Dundas* moved, That his Majesty's message be taken into consideration the next day.

Mr. *Grey* suggested that some papers would be necessary to enable the House to judge of the conduct of his Majesty's ministers in the discussion.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said his honourable friend had just gone to the bar to bring them up.

Mr. Secretary *Dundas* brought a copy of the Declaration of War by the Spanish Court, and notified that the Answer to this declaration would be laid before the House the next day.

The Stage Coach duty Bill was brought in and read a first time.

SOUTHWARK ELECTION.

Mr. *Thellusson* represented to the House that he had not been present when Mr. Tierney's petition was presented that he had been out of town, and that he now found that he could not be ready to answer one of the allegations contained in that petition, namely, that Mr. Tierney had a majority of legal votes, till Friday. He therefore moved, That the order for hearing the petition be discharged from the next day and fixed for Friday.

Mr. *Whitbread* rose to oppose what he considered as one of the strangest motions that ever had been made in the House. He reminded the House of the whole course of the business. When the petition was presented he announced his intention of making a general motion on the subject. This, however, he deferred till after the merits of the petition were decided, because it was his wish that the committee should enter unprejudiced upon the investigation of the cause. At the same time he stated, that as this decision was of more than ordinary importance, he was of opinion that the petition should take precedence of others; accordingly it was ordered to be heard the next day, and to ensure the attendance of members, the House was also ordered to be called over. After these arrangements were made, what did Mr. Thellusson require? That the ballot should be deferred till Friday. He was confident, however, that the
House

House would not agree to the motion when they considered the serious inconvenience with which it would be attended to the witnesses, who were already summoned to appear the next day, and the chance there was, if the call was disposed of to the next day, that they would not be able to make a House before Christmas.

Mr. Grey urged the inconvenience and expence to which the petitioner would be exposed, if the measure of postponing the petition was adopted. The witnesses, he observed, were many of them out of town: summonses had been issued for them, and those summonses had been served, at considerable cost. New summonses would be necessary: and if the trouble of serving those summonses was great at first, it would be much increased, by the circumstance of the witnesses being apprized that they were to be served, and keeping out of the way.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* supported Mr. Thellusson's motion. The delay which was proposed was not more than for about forty-eight hours: And with respect to the argument which had been used, that a longer notice of Mr. Thellusson's wishes should have been given, he thought it was impossible, a fortnight ago, to have foreseen causes which might have rendered so short a delay as that which was solicited necessary. As to the objection which Mr. Whitehead had urged, that the petitioner had only received notice of the intended motion in the morning, that had no weight; the order which it was moved to discharge, was made without any notice having been given to Mr. Thellusson; nor did he think what had been urged respecting the attendance of the witnesses deserved much attention. The House was always willing to save individuals from unnecessary trouble; but he supposed it to be of little consequence to them, whether they came to that House, from a place no further off than the Borough of Southwark, on Wednesday or on Friday. Mr. Tierney's personal inconvenience, where he was so much interested, could hardly be urged; and if it was urged, it would hardly be considered as a sufficient reason.

It was not his wish, when an application for time was made to the House, to speak to the merits of the case; but he heard that one of the points in the petition was a point of law, and turned upon an alledged disqualification, arising out of the decision of the committee on the former election. This he understood to be one of the grounds of the petition, and it was on this account that it gained a priority. Now, if the petition should be heard on Tuesday, he knew not
how

how this would expedite the business, as the motion was not intended to be made on the former report, unless it could be supposed that the petition, thus complicated in law and fact, would be decided before the recess. If he had ever heard a case in which an application for time was reasonable, it was the present.

Mr. *Whitbread* explained, and said, that if the motion for delay was pressed, he should certainly divide the House.

Mr. *Fox* argued against the delay; no good reason, he said, had been alledged for it; it would be attended with serious inconveniencies to the petitioner, to the witnesses, and to the members of the House. It intended to put off the motion, of which his honourable friend had given notice, which it was of great importance to have early brought forward; and lastly, it tended to establish a precedent for granting delays, which, if it was acquiesced in, in the present instance, he did not know when they could be reasonably withheld.

Mr. *W. Dundas* said, that a delay of about two days was all that was sought, and that the argument which was urged against granting it where it would be highly convenient, was the loss of two days pleasure to some of the gentlemen who might form the committee. To the witnesses it must certainly be indifferent whether they came to the House of Commons on Wednesday or on Friday. The great danger which had been urged of the possibility of not making a House sufficiently numerous on Friday did not strike him; for how easy was it to adjourn the call to that day, and then they were just as sure as on any other day.

Sir *Watkin Williams Wynne* strenuously opposed the delay, as contrary to the principle, and subversive of the influence of the act which bore the name of his respected ancestor (the Grenville Act.)

The House then divided on the motion for delaying the ballot till Friday,

<i>Ayes,</i>	-	-	-	-	-	93
<i>Noes,</i>	-	-	-	-	-	60
<i>Majority,</i>	-	-	-	-	-	33

Upon a motion that the call of the House, which stands for the next day, should be put off till Friday, a division took place.

<i>Ayes, (for the motion)</i>	-	-	-	87
<i>Noes (against it)</i>	-	-	-	63

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that owing to the great demand which had been made for the cavalry bill, no bill

bill could be procured to be laid before the House, which was necessary to be done in the regular mode of proceeding; he should therefore defer till to-morrow his motion for leave to bring a bill to explain and amend that act.

M. DE LA FAYETTE.

General *Fitzpatrick* said, that as the House was to be engaged in the discussion of a question of great publick importance, he should defer his motion relative to General la Fayette till Friday.

Mr. Alderman *Combe* said, that he had received information that attempts had already been made within the city of London, to levy the additional five *per cent.* and 10 *per cent.* on certain custom duties, before these taxes had in any shape obtained the approbation of the House, and he wished to know whether any authority for this purpose had been given at the treasury?

Mr. *Rose* said, that certainly no such authority had been given.

Mr. *Grey* said, the measure now complained of had last year been put in practice, and he himself had called the attention of the House to it, especially in the instance of the wine tax. Since the unjust and oppressive system of imposing retrospective taxes had been introduced, no more violent stretch of power had been attempted, and which, if permitted, directly went to destroy the privileges of the House.

Mr. *Rose* said, that there might some enquiries have been made for the purpose of obtaining information for the commissioners of the customs, but no authority had been given at the treasury for the purpose alluded to.

Mr. *Grey* said, that the same assertion had last year been brought forward, although the case had actually been as he stated to the House.

Mr. *Grey* then said, that, as the subject of advance to the Emperor would soon be the object of discussion, he wished to know if any interest had yet been paid upon the loan which had been granted to the Emperor? The interest for the first year had been allowed when the loan itself was given; but there was no information yet in the possession of the House with regard to the payment of interest for the subsequent period?

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that the honourable gentleman might move, that an account should be laid before

fore the House upon the subject concerning which he asked for information.

Mr. *Grey* then moved, That there be laid before the House, an account of the sums received in payment of the interest on the Imperial loan, and the manner in which it had been received. Ordered.

Mr. *W. Smith* said, that last year he had moved for an address to his Majesty, for certain papers, which had not yet been laid before the House; he should therefore move, That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, praying that he would graciously be pleased to give orders for laying before the House copies of the different acts for the regulation of slaves, which had been transmitted from the colonies, for the approbation of his Majesty, since the year 1788. Agreed to.

The Trent and Mersey Bill was read a third time and passed.

The committees of supply, and ways and means, were postponed till Wednesday.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, *December 13.*

Counsel were heard further in the Scottish appeal, John Pringle, appellant and Janet Dove and Jane Dove executrices, &c. of Elizabeth Todd, respondents.

The Bill for augmenting the number of canons residentiary of Litchfield, the Trent and Mersey navigation Bill, and another private Bill were brought up from the Commons, presented and read a first time.

Lord *Grenville* then moved the order of the day for the consideration of his Majesty's message, announcing to the House the declaration of war of the court of Madrid against Great Britain.

The order being read, and his Majesty's message,

Lord *Grenville* said, so confident was he that there could be but one opinion entertained by their Lordships on the subject of the message from his Majesty that had been just read, and upon the declaration of war to which it referred, and which then lay, with the answer to it, upon their Lordships table, and that the address he was about to move would meet with their unanimous concurrence, that it would be wholly unnecessary for him to trouble the House with more than a
very

very few words previous to his moving it. This was the third time during the reign of present Sovereign, that the king of Spain had thought proper to declare war against this country. On every of those occasions the causes assigned for such hostile conduct on the part of the court of Madrid towards Great Britain, had been so frivolous in their nature and so little supportable upon grounds either of justice or of policy, that perhaps not any equally frivolous and puerile were to be found recorded in the annals of Europe, as the alledged pretexts of war declared by one sovereign state against another. But frivolous as the causes for declaring war against Great Britain, alledged by the court of Madrid, had been on the two preceding occasions, those stated in the declaration of war then upon their lordships table, were infinitely more frivolous, more puerile and more absurd, and the only feeling that a perusal of them could inspire, must be the utmost astonishment, that any description of individuals calling themselves statesmen, could seriously bring them forward in the eyes of the world, and gravely assign them as plausible reasons for a declaration of war against a country recently their ally, and which had on every occasion manifested its friendly intentions towards their sovereign and his interests. This was the third time in his Majesty's reign that the king of Spain, not naturally the enemy of this country in any political view, had chosen to interfere, when Great Britain was engaged in hostilities with France, and without the smallest provocation on the part of his Majesty, to espouse the interests of the French. Flimsy and little supportable by truth or policy, however, as the causes assigned by the court of Madrid on the present occasion were, his Majesty had not been on that account prevented from exerting his utmost endeavours to preserve the harmony, that had lately subsisted between the two courts, and by discussing the points in question through the medium of friendly negotiation compromise their differences, and avert the horrors and calamities of war. All his Majesty's efforts to this purpose had proved ineffectual, through the obstinate and haughty refusal of the court of Madrid, acting no doubt under the influence of the enemy, to accede to any negotiation by the means of which the imaginary grievances the king of Spain now complained of, might have been amicably adjusted. So little doubt did he entertain that their lordships would be perfectly satisfied with the conduct of his Majesty's ministers, on this important subject, that he was rather inclined to fear that the House might consider it as too conciliatory and humiliating,

especially to a power, which by its subsequent abrupt and offensive declaration of war, had shewn how little it was entitled to so much respect and attention on the part of the British government. With regard to the address, which he should in a few moments have the honour to propose, he was too confident of the loyalty and patriotism of that House to think that their lordships would not cordially concur in an unanimous assurance to his Majesty of that support which he had so often experienced in cases where the dignity of his crown, and the honour, the safety, and the dearest interests of the British empire, were concerned. Having thought it necessary to say thus much, lord Grenville declared, he would not be so unjust to the feelings of their lordships as to trespass longer on their attention, but would proceed to move the address, which he held in his hand.

The address was read by the clerk, and afterwards by the Lord Chancellor, and agreed to by the House *nemine dissente*.

Ordered to be carried up to his Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, *December 13.*

Mr. *Mainwaring* presented a petition from the wharfingers of Shadwell, against the proposed plan for building wet docks at Wapping, which was ordered to be laid upon the table.

Mr. *Dent* moved for an account of the amount of the number of letters and packets sent or received free from the duty of postage, distinguishing those sent or received by the members of that House, from the 5th of April, 1796, to the latest period to which the accounts can be made up. Ordered.

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* presented copies of the declaration of war against this country by the court of Madrid, and the answer to the same, which were ordered to be laid upon the table.

Mr. *Rose* moved for leave to bring in a Bill for more effectually securing the stamp duties on indentures, &c. from frauds. Agreed to.

The Bill for regulating the rates of postage, and the inland navigation duty Bill, were read a first time.

The stage coach duty Bill, the Dutch property Bill, and the Kircudbright roads Bill, were read a second time, and committed.

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The Litchfield church Bill was read a third time, and passed.

DUTIES UPON THE CUSTOMS.

Mr. *Alderman Combe* repeated the assertion he had made the preceding day, respecting the collecting of the new additional duties of five and ten *per cent.* upon the customs. He was authorised, he said, to repeat it, and was enabled to insist on the truth of it, by the accurate information which he had again received on the subject; and he could assure the House, that those duties were collected both on Saturday last and the preceding day.

Mr. *Rose* explained, that, according to the ordinary practice, a letter had been sent from the lords of the treasury to the commissioners of the customs, acquainted them that a resolution had been passed in the committee of ways and means, to raise a supply by an increase of duty on certain articles of customs, and desiring them to give publick notice of the articles on which the duties were to attach. The commissioners accordingly gave notice to the officers of the long room; and at the same time informed them, that the levy was not to be made till the act of parliament had passed; yet, notwithstanding this declaration, he understood that, in one case, the duties had been taken, but on the discovery of the mistake, were immediately after returned back to the party.

Mr. *Whitbread* wished to know the date of the Spanish declaration of war, as there was no date in the paper on the table.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* informed him, that the declaration was delivered without a date, and therefore he did not know it; but he had no objection to inform him, when it was received.

Mr. *Whitbread* made some observation on the considerable length of time which had elapsed between the knowledge of that declaration and the communication of it to the House; and moved, that there be laid before the House, the date of the day on which that declaration was received, as also, the date of the answer to the said declaration: Ordered.

IMPERIAL LOAN.

Mr. *Grey* stated, that, having the preceding day moved for accounts of the amount of the interest paid by his Imperial Majesty, for the loan granted to him by this country, and recollecting that the Emperor had solemnly pledged himself

by the treaty, not only to pay the interest, but annually to pay off 60,000*l.* by way of sinking fund, for the discharge of the capital, he wished to know whether he had fulfilled his engagement, and provided for that extinction of the debt.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* informed him, that as no publick board had any concern for that extinction, he had no means of information; but he doubted not that, in consequence of an order from that House, the lords of the treasury would be able to obtain the information which the honourable gentleman required, from the Emperor's agents.

Mr. *Grey* foresaw the difficulty attending his enquiry; but as the House had guaranteed the loan, he thought he was bound in duty to watch the discharge of the capital, and, upon that ground wished to know what sums had been remitted by the Emperor as well as paid for that purpose.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* replied, that there could be no other explicit mode of obtaining information, than by making a new order to supersede the other, which might possibly occasion a delay of the returns already moved for, and which would else be ready to be presented the next day.

Mr. *Grey* was satisfied; and therefore moved for an account to be laid before the House of what sums had been remitted by his Imperial Majesty towards the discharge of the loan granted to him by this country, and what sums also had been paid by his agents for that purpose. Ordered.

MONEY SENT TO THE EMPEROR.

Mr. *Fox* said, upon looking over the accounts of the sums expended upon the extraordinaries of the army and the vote of credit, he perceived that where the Emperor's name was mentioned, the sums would not amount to the 1,200,000*l.* stated to have been granted to him by the right honourable gentleman, and if he took into account the various sums sent to colonel Crawford, it would be much more. He therefore wished some information on the subject.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he did not know whether he could accurately state, from memory, the various sums allowed to each, but 1,200,000*l.* was the sum he had always had in contemplation to assist the Emperor with.

Mr. *Fox* moved for an account of the particulars of the sums furnished to Colonel Crawford, together with an account of the several bills drawn by him, with the dates of the bills respectively. Ordered.

Sir

Sir *William Pulteney* moved for an account of the dates of the several bills drawn for money, for the use of his Imperial Majesty. Ordered.

HIS MAJESTY'S MESSAGE.

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* moved the order of the day for taking his Majesty's message relative to the declaration of war of the court of Madrid against Great Britain into consideration. The message being read.

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* said, that by his Majesty's command he had laid before the House the declaration of war by the court of Madrid, and an answer on the part of this government to the allegations contained in that declaration. Under those circumstances the House must perceive the necessity and propriety of affording the most vigorous support to the executive government, and he conceived that it was necessary for him to add nothing further to procure the unanimous support of the House to the address which he had now to propose. If any additional information was wanted on the subject, there would be ample occasion in future to propose any inquiries for that purpose, and it would then rest with the discretion of the House to decide, whether it was fit that such information should be granted; but at present he conceived he should meet with no opposition to the motion, "That an Humble Address be presented to his Majesty, returning thanks for his most gracious communication, &c."

Mr. *Fox* said, I rise for one to express my perfect concurrence in the sentiments of the present address. At the same time I cannot but consider the event to which it alludes, a war with Spain, as a serious addition to the calamities of this country, and as affording a new source of regret, amidst the many disasters which we have been called to deplore in the course of the present contest. And at this moment I cannot help thinking, how very ill ministers have calculated with respect to the consequences of the contest. The very gentleman who has now stood forward to suggest to you the propriety and necessity of agreeing to the present address, at the commencement of the war, and in order to induce the House to embark in the measures which were then adopted by administration, asserted that we were in a situation in which we had only to encounter the opposition of France, and in which we might expect the concurrence of almost the whole of Europe. This, among others, is a striking proof of the
blindness

blindness of those counsels by which we were led into the present war. There are some parts of this address which meet with my warmest approbation; we are told that every thing has been done to avoid the calamity of war. Can ministers say the same thing with respect to the war undertaken against France? I hope that this sentiment will be adopted in every future address on the subject of war, and that every possible step will be taken, in order to preserve tranquility, before ministers have recourse to the desperate measure of plunging the country into all the evils of hostility. It is such a conduct alone which can render any war just, politic and necessary. I have only to add that though perhaps the declaration of war on the part of Spain could not have been communicated, I think that the House have scarcely been treated with proper respect, as they have had no intimation of the measures which might have led ministers to expect such a declaration. I cheerfully give my vote to the present address, on the supposition that the assertion with respect to every step having been taken to avert hostility, is strictly true; at the same time, notwithstanding the sanguine language talked out of doors, I cannot but consider a war with Spain as a great addition to the calamities of the country.

The address was then read and carried *nem. con.* and such members as are of his Majesty's most honourable privy council desired to wait upon his Majesty, to know when he will be graciously pleased to receive the same.

NAVY BILLS.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that he had to bring forward a Bill, the object of which was in every point of view so eligible, that except some express objection was started, he should without further preface introduce it to the attention of the House. He therefore moved, that leave be given to bring in a Bill for the more speedily paying Navy, Transport, and Victualling Bills.

Mr. *Fox* did not understand precisely what was to be the limitation of their currency, but it appeared in general that the time of payment would take place within three months from the date. Now, if that were to be the case, he supposed the right honourable gentleman would take care to be provided at the time when they should fall due, by the regular supplies or votes of credit. But if a long recess of parliament ensued, or there should be any error in the amount

amount of the provision for their payment, he feared that government would risque some inconvenience by this measure, in not having any fund to defray the bills when they fell due; and therefore he suggested this opinion to the House, that he might know by what means this inconvenience was to be avoided.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, it would be a proper period to make these comments when the Bill came to be discussed. A currency of three months only appeared to him at present to be the best mode of supporting the public credit, and affording relief to individuals, inasmuch as the payment would be nearly equivalent to ready money. In regard to Navy Bills, six months might elapse before they would be paid, although they would be floating no longer than three months in the market, and in regard to the other observations of the right honourable gentleman, if great and unforeseen necessities should arise, it might be prudent to extend the time of payment.

Mr. *Fox* said, if he understood the right honourable gentleman rightly, six months might elapse before Navy Bills became due after the time of their being issued, although they would not be more than three months in the market. In that case, he trusted, some security for the payment was to be given to the person to whom they should be delivered. In regard to the occasional extent of currency, in great and unforeseen expences, he was apprehensive great objection would arise, since the Bill in that case would not destroy the evil for which it was intended; but whilst it created new inconveniences would tolerate the old ones in suffering the bills to accumulate a heavy rate of interest and discount by running to the same extent.

Leave was given to bring in the Bill; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Lords of the Treasury, Mr. Rose, and Mr. Long, were desired to prepare and bring in the same.

INTERFERENCE OF THE MILITARY.

The *Secretary at War* said, that the preceding night a learned gentleman had complained warmly of the improper intervention of a party of the military at Northampton. As he at that time knew nothing of the circumstance, he could say nothing upon the subject. He had alluded to a similar complaint which had last year been made by a noble Lord, when, after an investigation of the particulars it appeared

peared, that an application had been made by a magistrate for the interference of the troops, that thanks had been returned to the War Office for their attention to the request, and to the troops for their reasonable assistance on the occasion. In the present instance, he had found that an application had been made from the Lord Lieutenant of the county to the Secretary of State for the assistance of a military force, as considerable apprehension was entertained with respect to the probability of some disturbance. This application had in the usual way been transmitted to the War Office, and the necessary steps of consequence were taken to comply with the request. He believed, however, that there was a gentleman present much better qualified to speak to the circumstances and result of the whole transaction.

Mr. *Powys* was sorry, as member for the county, that he had not been present the preceding day to exculpate the War-Office, for the whole weight of the complaint was to be transferred to the lord lieutenant, deputy lieutenant, and magistrates of the county, since as it was in consequence of their application the military interfered, they were alone responsible. At a previous meeting of some of the magistrates of the county, some apprehensions of tumultuous and riotous proceedings were stated, for the prevention of which the civil power was not thought quite adequate. An hon. member of that House, and commander of a regiment, offered to take any measure most conducive to the preservation of the peace, and the lord lieutenant, deputy lieutenant, and magistrates, accordingly desired him to make application to the War-Office for orders to do so. The orders were obtained, and the magistrates took upon them afterwards to make the distribution. As to the behaviour of the troops, he could state nothing: but if they had been guilty of any impropriety, he thought it would not only have come to his ears, but form the strongest contrast to their general behaviour, for they had received the thanks of the county.

Mr. *Jekyl* said, that notwithstanding the style in which the Secretary at War had the preceding night thought proper to treat the subject which he had then brought forward, and which, without much coarseness of language, he conceived himself entitled to say rather bordered on flippancy, the right honourable gentleman had regarded it however as a matter of sufficient consequence to be again brought forward. What he had the preceding night stated rested on the authority of a letter of the utmost publicity, and which
had

had hitherto remained uncontradicted. The letter mentioned that the appellants had, in breach of the law, been obstructed by the military, while proceeding to exercise their right of appeal; and that Mr. Woodhall felt so indignant at this outrage that he had resigned his office of deputy lieutenant. The magistrates in one district had surely no right to call out the military to controul the proceedings of a different district, nor were any body of magistrates, with a lord lieutenant at their head, justified in bringing forward a military force to dragoon the people, for he could find no other phrase for such conduct. We had often heard of a vigour beyond the law, and now it seemed that the period was arrived when this beautiful theory was to be reduced to practice.

Mr. *Powys* said, the learned gentleman was mistaken in supposing that this measure was undertaken by the magistrates of the other districts, without the concurrence of those belonging to that particular district. The meeting was one of the lord lieutenant, deputy lieutenant, and magistrates of the whole county, and it was upon the representation of a magistrate of this very district, that this application had been made; for he stated, that there were symptoms of tumult in that district and the neighbourhood. The learned gentleman thought he had discharged his duty in bringing forward this business, but he had only discharged it in part, for if he still thought there was any ground for complaint, he should bring it forward in a distinct motion, and call for the necessary proofs.

Sir *William Dolben* rose to confirm the statement made by the honourable gentleman who spoke last. This application was made at the desire of a general meeting. It was therefore a most unjust accusation to say, that they were sent to dragoon the people. He thought the force of the country could not be better employed, than in assisting the civil power, when it was resisted by those seditious spirits who wished to dragoon their betters; but he hoped they were now silent for ever.

Lord *William Russell* thought that the explanation of the two last honourable gentlemen did not at all tend to place the matter in a more favourable point of view. He regarded the present as one of those instances in which the interference of the military had been unwarrantably employed. He considered every such instance as pregnant with alarm at a moment like the present, when there seemed to be an intention

to subvert all the established principles of the constitution, and to introduce in their stead a military government.

Colonel *Villars* claimed the indulgence of the House, and said there certainly were symptoms of a tumultuous and riotous assembly; and moreover, if the troops had not been called out, the magistrates would not have been able to perform their duty, since an armed mob was coming to join the people already assembled. At five o'clock in the evening, however, the magistrates informed the troops that every thing was quiet, and thanking them for their assistance, gave them their discharge. This was a strong proof the soldiers did nothing more than co-operate with the civil power for the preservation of the peace.

Mr. *Fox* said, it appeared that every statement of his hon. and learned friend the preceeding night had been correctly advanced, since none denied them. He only knew Mr. Wodhall by report, and he understood, that he was a gentleman of great ability and reputation. Now it appeared from that gentleman's statement, that the military had been parading up and down the streets of his district, without any application from the magistrates; for though the magistrates of Northampton had solicited the assistance of the military power, the magistrates of Brackley had disclaimed it. It certainly was very strange then, that one set of magistrates should send for troops to aid the civil power of another. Surely the magistrates themselves were the true judges of what was necessary for the exercise of their authority in their own districts. But they had been told that this assistance had been sent as a preventive measure. The government was very swift in adopting these preventative measures he observed, and indeed so swift that no thinking man could look without alarm at their alacrity.

Colonel *Villars*, Mr. *Perceval*, Mr. *Fox*, and Sir *William Dolben*, entered into mutual explanation.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* before he brought forward the motion, of which he had given previous notice, begged leave to say a few words upon the manner in which this subject had been introduced, and in so doing, he said, he would give a faithful recitation of the whole proceedings. It originated in a complaint against the war-office; it was then shifted upon the whole collective magistracy, and the honourable and learned gentleman opposite had now discovered it to be a part of a system for dragooning the people. His only apology for using that expression was, that he could find

find no other word at that time ; and, doubtless, it was very true ; for if he could, he never would have miscalled the assistance of the military, at the requisition of the civil power, and subordinate at the same time to the direction of the civil power, a measure to dragoon the people. Equal to this honourable and learned gentleman's language was the force of a noble lord's ideas, in mistaking such an exercise of the military power, enforced by civil authority, for a military government. Thus, the learned gentleman, by an extraordinary embellishment, had attempted to enrich his own language : and the noble lord had given to the House an impressive idea of his constitutional knowledge. The next charge was transferred to the county of Northampton, complaining that the county was desirous to erect a military despotism ; and then the next charge was brought against the officer of the troops for having necessarily distributed them after asking the opinion of the magistrates upon the necessity of doing so, and taking their opinion in the affirmative. The other instance of dragooning the people was, in the allegation that the military force had obstructed the appellants, and yet it appeared that these appellants, who were so violently and unconstitutionally obstructed, were coming with an armed force to reinforce another riotous assembly, and oppose the execution of the laws. [*A cry from the Opposition of No, no, no ! and from the other side of Hear him, hear him !*] This at least was what he understood, and after all this violent and abusive interference of the military power against the consent and inclination of the magistrates ; it appeared that at five o'clock in the evening, a message was sent from the magistrates to the troops, to inform them that every thing was quiet, and that they might go home. He had only one word more to say, which was, that he hoped gentlemen would no longer continue to defer the business of the day by such irregular discourse, but if they conceived the subject required further investigation, he should concur in the wish of his honourable friend (Mr. Powys) that they would regularly ascertain the fact by moving for the papers of application from the magistrates to the war-office, for the support of military force.

Mr. Grey wished to make a few observations upon the sarcasms of the right honourable gentleman, supported by what he called a faithful recitation of facts. Though an honourable gentleman had exculpated the war-office, he still thought there were grounds enough for an enquiry into a

measure, which went so far to affect the liberties of the people, since he could by no means determine who was to blame. But this he knew, that when the magistrates asserted that the appellants had been obstructed by the military force, the truth of that assertion ought to be investigated. The right honourable gentleman had said that the troops were only called out for a preventive measure, and that though they were ready to act, they did not act; and yet the magistrates alledge that they obstructed the appellants. This was one proof of his faithful recitation. Now the complaint was that the troops had been unconstitutionally drawn out to dragoon the people without the authority of the magistrates, and that the commanding officer took upon him to parade the streets, not only in defiance of the requisition, but in defiance of the magistrates; and then the right honourable gentleman in a loud tone of voice exclaims, that the appellants were a mob in arms. So much for the fidelity of his statements. With an ingenuity by no means surprising to the House, and by no means uncommon to the right honourable gentleman, he had converted peaceable appellants into an armed mob. He did not know *but* the conduct of the officer was blameless, although he was sure that it deserved no praise. He concluded in expressing his opinion that his honourable and learned friend was entitled to the thanks of the House for bringing this subject forward.

Colonel *Villars*, in explanation said, that one mob was assembled, that another with arms was on the march to join it, and that the magistrates with one voice further represented that they should not have been able to carry the act into execution without the assistance of the soldiers.

Mr. *Jekyll* was proceeding to reply, when the speaker put an end to the conversation, by observing that it was totally irregular.

SUPPLEMENTAL MILITIA.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* observed, that he had given notice on a former day of his intention to bring in a explanatory Bill, to make some alterations in that which lately passed for raising a supplemental militia, in order that it might be carried more easily into effect. He would not make any observations then on the subject, but content himself with first moving that the Bill already passed be read; which being done, he then moved, "That leave be given to bring in a bill to explain and amend the said act.

Mr.

Mr. *Fox* said, he should move an amendment, that instead of "explain and amend," should be inserted the word "repeal." He conceived the bill to be so objectionable, that he had no difficulty in saying it would be wasting the time of the House to enter into detail upon the subject. He appealed to the House, whether after what they had heard of what took place in Northamptonshire, and various other places, they were not convinced it was a measure which had excited a general discontent in the country; if so, he thought that by continuing such a bill they would do something more calculated to favour, than to defeat the designs of our enemies, the Bill being, as he apprehended it to be, generally disliked, especially among the lower classes of the people. However laudable the intention of officers might be, it could not be put in execution without very great inconvenience, and the advantages of it at best would be very trifling. He, therefore, without enlarging on the matter, moved, That instead of the words "explain and amend," be inserted the word "repeal." He should not, however, take the sense of the House upon his motion, unless some other gentleman should require it.

Mr. *M. A. Taylor* seconded the amendment.

Mr. *Jolliffe* said, that he rose to express his approbation of the amendment which had been moved. He was convinced that in case of any invasion being attempted upon this country every person would, without compulsion, be ready to take arms in its defence. The present measure had occasioned no small dissatisfaction in the country, and to excite such a disposition in the people would certainly tend to defeat the object of internal security. He did not wish that ministers should be rendered unpopular, and if they desire to avoid that consequence they would, for their own sakes, look to the state of the country, and consider the effects which the measure might produce by counteracting the design for which it was intended.

Mr. Secretary *Dundas* said, that he could scarcely believe that the right honourable gentleman seriously imagined that the arguments he had used would induce the House to reject the measure which it was proposed to adopt; he should, however, say a few words to what had fallen from the right honourable gentleman who had just sat down. It was said the measure had met with great opposition, and excited no inconsiderable portion of discontent. He would beg leave, however, to remind the House, and particularly those gentlemen who were too young to recollect the fact, that

when

when the plan of a militia was first suggested, which since, in the opinion of all, was admitted to be our true constitutional defence, and the best guardian of our security, it had encountered an opposition more general and unequivocal, more resolute and determined, than any which had been displayed upon the present occasion. This much, however, he would venture to say, that if any measure was found by the legislature to be necessary for the welfare of the country, it ought not to be given up merely because those for whose good it was intended, did not perceive its advantages, or resisted its operation. For his own part, he considered that it would most highly conduce to the security of the country if the measures of defence were put upon a larger scale; and if all men throughout the kingdom taught themselves the use of arms, that when any danger required the exertion necessary, they might be able, as well as willing, to contribute their assistance. He thought that that day he might congratulate gentlemen upon the other side on having got up their spirits. At present they seemed to be perfectly free from the apprehension of danger. He hoped, however, they would not be lions one day and hares the next. He hoped they would act with some consistency in their cries of alarm and their assertions of security. One day they expatiated upon the danger with which the country in certain circumstances might be threatened. When Holland was likely to be over-run by the victorious arms of France, it was said upon the other side that the danger which was apprehended from this event was a mere bug-bear, while again they represented the circumstance of so much importance as to threaten the safety of this country. The dread of danger still remained, and the panic which this had produced had not subsided. Some months ago, when the armies of our allies were flying before the victorious armies of France, apprehensions were entertained that if the enemy succeeded in subduing the force of Austria, an attempt of invasion would be made. In consequence of the success which attended for a time their operations, there was no man who did not believe that when the French had succeeded in humbling the House of Austria, they entertained ideas of employing the forces, which they would then have at their disposal, in a descent upon this country. He appealed to the House whether this disposition had not been announced? It still was his solemn conviction that such a design was in agitation; and he would say, that he was a bold man that in the event to which he alluded would maintain, that the attempt

attempt of a descent would not have been made on Great Britain.

[Here Mr. *M. A. Taylor* whispered, that it was in Ireland that ministers apprehended the danger of invasion.

Mr. *Dundas* continued, that ministers had indeed apprehended danger of an invasion upon Ireland; but they had apprehended it in this country also. Still there was reason to believe that the scheme was not abandoned. He knew for certain, that at present the ports of France were full of boats, and that troops were in readiness for such an attempt. In circumstances like these, would it be said, that we ought not to prepare against the undertaking; that we ought not to take measures for the public safety? He could not but be astonished too, that any objection should be made to measures by which the security of the country was to be promoted at such a critical period as this. While a negotiation was pending, by which his Majesty's ministers were pledged to exert every effort for the restoration of peace, did the right honourable gentleman mean to tell the enemy that we were not prepared for our internal defence, and invite them to an attack, by the display of our defenceless situation. To add weight, therefore, to the negotiations for peace, we ought, by our financial arrangements, by the formidable state of our military and naval power, and by the respectable state of our internal defence, to shew that, if the enemy refused to accede to safe and honourable terms, we were prepared to resist any enterprize they might undertake, and to annoy them in every quarter of the world. It was extraordinary too, that, when a new enemy was that night announced; when they were called upon to provide for that new emergency, the first fruits of the promised support were propositions on the part of the honourable gentleman to render our means of security less than when that enemy did not exist. His firm opinion was, that this country ought never to be at war without adopting that systematic plan of increasing our strength which would at once render us formidable abroad and secure at home. This alone could enable us to act with vigour, and to display our resources with effect; this alone would enable us to prosecute war with success, and compel the enemy to agree to honourable conditions of peace.

Mr. *Walpole* asked, if it was meant to introduce any clause to grant exceptions to those districts where a certain number of persons had voluntarily come forward?

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The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that every attention should be paid to that point; but, to give any exception to a particular district would operate in favour of those who had not acted in this matter.

Mr. *M. A. Taylor* said, he rose to give his reasons for seconding the amendment of his honourable friend, and the grounds of his opposition to the present measure. The honourable gentleman alluded to what he had said with no idea of giving interruption, and he should not allow any thing said by the honourable gentleman, or any other member in the House, in allusion to what had fallen from him, to pass unanswered. He would say, that he did not think that an invasion of this country was likely. He was convinced that ministers themselves did not consider it probable. He had conversed with several intelligent naval and military officers upon the subject, and he had been informed that it would be very difficult to land 5000, and was it likely that the French, acquainted with the dispositions of the people of the country, and with the military talents they had displayed, would sacrifice so many men upon so absurd an enterprize. He supported the amendment of his honourable friend because he conceived the measure likely to defeat the object of defence. When the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) came forward, as he so frequently did, to amend his Bills, he would tell him, upon the present occasion, that the best mode of securing the country from invasion, was to conciliate the minds of the people. He himself had seen the discontents which the Bills had excited. The inhabitants of the populous place of the country, where he resided, were particularly averse to the measure, and when they were told that they might fine or procure substitutes, they declared they would do neither. It was attended with very oppressive consequences to the farmer, for after lists had been given in, their servants removed from one part of the country to another, to avoid being drawn, and subjected their masters to great inconveniences. It was a severe burden upon the middling classes, who found it no trifling matter to procure substitutes. The honourable gentleman (Mr. Dundas) might laugh, as it was certainly of little moment to him, he had places enough to enable him to pay the expence, and he might not be disposed to consider the situation of others. For his part he was not like the honourable gentleman (Mr. Joliffe,) he wished to alienate the minds of the people from ministers, because the measures they pursued tended to alienate the people from the government. He wished to live and die peaceably,

peaceably, and he was sorry when he saw any measure taken by ministers that could contribute to unsettle the minds of the people, and alienate them from his Majesty. The honourable gentleman said, that it was proper that all the people in the country should be armed, though formerly he had stated that there were many dangerous and disaffected persons whom it would be imprudent to arm. If the honourable gentleman saw the necessity of arming in that point of view, why did he not learn the exercise of arms? For his part he did not consider the necessity so striking, nor was he inclined to learn.

General *Tarleton* said, that the situation of the country was now very different from what it was some months ago. The reverses of the French had deranged every plan of invasion which they could have entertained. The real mode of securing the country was to render the people contented, happy and free, instead of harrassing them with unnecessary burdens. No design was at this time entertained by the enemy; their forces were removed from the coast. He considered the present measure as calculated, in case of emergency, to produce confusion without adding to our strength. The House ought to be cautious of entertaining a Bill which imposed such burdens. It was besides dangerous to invest ministers with the power which this force would confer. In its present shape, though inefficient, yet it might rendered efficient by an act of parliament. Nay, it might be done now adays without an act of parliament. Ministers might render it a standing force without any object of necessity or advantage. It was a part of a system introduced into this country by ministers to encrease the power of the crown. With the other measures which they had employed to connect the army more intimately with the executive power, instead of maintaining their independence on the House, this formed another step towards a military government, and by arming one sixth part of the community ministers wished to convert them into engines of robbing the remainder.

Sir *William Pulteney* said, he did not agree with those who represented the Bill as a vexatious measure. The only thing that he had to disapprove of was, that this measure was not so extensive as, in his opinion, it ought to be. He believed, if the Bill was generally understood not to require the taking of men to a great distance from their homes, there would be little or no opposition to it any where. But the idea of taking men to a great distance from the places of their usual labour might occasion some discontent. The

measure, in its nature, resembled, in some degree, the establishment of the militia. That establishment, it was well known, was a great source of strength to the country in a military view, and a great strength to the constitution; because when the people were all unarmed, and when a Prince wishes to enslave them, and has a large military force at his command, the people are, in a great measure, at his mercy. That can never be the cause when the people have arms in their hands. He remembered when the subject of a militia was agitated in parliament, the ministers of the day were averse to the measure; but on the other side of the House there was every cry in favour of the measure. He thought this measure the same in principle, and therefore he approved of it. He had conversed with many military men, for whose judgment he had great respect; and they thought there might be some danger of invasion. If they were right, there was an absolute necessity for this as a measure of defence. If we were called upon, he had no doubt but that every man would come forward in defence of the country; in the mean time it was proper that as many as could, should have some preparation, in case of necessity. This was a corps merely intended to be in readiness. They would suffer no inconvenience at all. They would each have a shilling a day, nearly double the pay of other soldiers. Upon the whole he believed that, with the exception of a few discontented people, the mass of the inhabitants of this country would approve of the measure. He believed they wished to resist the enemy by all means. He therefore wished to see this measure tried; for he had a decided opinion in its favour. He approved of what had been said upon arming all the people of this country, and of teaching them the use of arms. We had before us the example of the effects of such a measure in America and in Switzerland; they had supported their governments, because they approved of their governments, and without their approbation certainly those governments could not subsist; by arming the people, however, these constitutions and governments had been supported; but they would be in great danger without such a measure. He approved of this measure of arming the people as far as it went. Sixty thousand men were a considerable number, but he wished it was much larger.

Mr. Taylor said a few words in explanation.

Sir Wm. Geary said he rose to rescue the people of England from the charge of being hostile to the measure, for he was convinced that they entertained different sentiments, because

because they saw that thus they would best be able to defend themselves from attack. Within his observation he had seen no dislike to the Bill; he had witnessed the reverse. Some circumstances of disapprobation were said to exist in Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire, but it did not exist to any extent. He would not say that any gentleman had endeavoured to obstruct the operation of the Bill, they did not, however, consider what might be the effect of their example. It was said that no apprehension could now be entertained, but whoever reflected on the nature of the enemy we had to oppose, whom this country, to its eternal honour, and to the salvation of Europe, had stood forward to oppose, would hesitate before he asserted that the design might not be revived. For his own part, he was firmly convinced that the attempt might be made, and that every measure of precaution ought to be taken.

The question upon the amendment of Mr. Fox was then put and negatived without a division.

CAVALRY BILL.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* rose to move for leave to bring in a Bill to explain and amend an act passed this session for the augmentation of the irregular cavalry of this kingdom. He said that he had made every possible enquiry into the effects which the Bill it was his intention to amend had on the public mind, and he had received from different parts of the country information of the most satisfactory nature. He was in consequence of that investigation, and from having more maturely considered the subject in its various relations, confirmed in his opinion, that the statements which had been so repeatedly made by gentlemen on the other side of the House, of the difficulties that occurred in carrying it into execution were very much exaggerated. It appeared to him that a few clauses would be completely sufficient to obviate these difficulties. The only one that seemed of any moment, was the decision on appeals; but that could be easily remedied, by requiring that the decision with respect to the appellants should be made previous to entering on the ballot. Thus the objection, which, in his mind possessed the greatest weight, would be removed. It was, he trusted, unnecessary for him to enter at that moment into a discussion of the principal grounds which had given rise to the measure of proposing the Cavalry Act. The reasons which had induced the House to concur in passing it, had been already stated both that night and in former debates. But certainly, if there had been found wisdom and policy in bringing forward in the first instance that regulation, nothing had since occurred

occurred to lessen that wisdom and policy. There were, on the contrary, additional arguments which arose from the circumstances that had since taken place, which strengthened the propriety of adopting the measure. The subject might be very justly considered in two points of view. 1st. Whether this particular regulation contributed to the security of the country? 2ndly, Whether it was attended with disadvantages to the nation that would over-balance the benefits it held out? In proportion as a greater accession of strength was required to give security to the country at home, and vigour to its operations abroad, the necessity of the measure appeared more obvious. The question was in its true state, whether we should in the hour of danger neglect preparations entirely because every thing could not be in a most complete state of readiness? He could with confidence say, that it was much to know that a certain number of men, mounted upon good and able horses, was provided for the public service. It was much to know the exact state of our force in each particular district. It was much to know the various officers by whom that force was to be commanded. It could not therefore be considered as an argument of any weight, that because we had no regular force properly calculated for instant service, that we should not have such a one as might be deemed wise in point of prudential preparation. The next step was, to consider the burthen which the Bill would impose on the public, and here he could not help declaring, that in no instance did he recollect greater exaggerations than those which had been so industriously spread as to the operations of the act in that respect. No person was liable to be called out but he who was competent to keep one horse. With regard to the extra expence, it was to be paid in common by the ten persons who were to furnish the horse. The cloathing and saddle would prove no additional increase of expence to the person on whom the ballot might fall, as it was to be regulated by the Deputy Lieutenant at the common charge of the others. If the person chosen by ballot was actually called into service, he would be at no expence whatever. The only extra charge that offered itself to his consideration, was that which arose from the uniform. A charge indispensable to carry the plan perfectly into execution. The expence of uniform had been already taken into consideration; and it appeared, on a fair estimate, that it would not amount to more than the moderate sum of 2l. 9s. But even that not to be paid by the person
who

who might be chosen by ballot, for it would be fairly divided amongst the ten persons of the description he had stated, who were to furnish a horse. He would, therefore, submit to the candour of the House, whether such expence as would be incurred according to the clauses of the Bill was of that enormous nature to warrant the exaggerations which had been so industriously spread, with respect to the additional burthens it would impose on the public.

He then moved for leave to bring in a Bill to explain and amend the Cavalry act.

Colonel *Harcourt* was far from disputing the necessity of discipline. It suited not his profession, nor his inclination to do so. He hoped his character in the army would bear testimony for him, that he was a friend to discipline. But he was confident that the force which might be raised under these Bills, although they should not have the advantage of a disciplined body, might be of great service, if called out in the hour of danger. He had been witness to the efficacy of such a force as this would be; he had seen it both in Flanders and in the West Indies. He added, that he gave his hearty assent to the present measure.

Mr. *Biddulph* said, he was happy that the present measure came before the House in its present shape, because it proved that the difficulties which many gentlemen, as well as himself had stated would attend it, were felt by the authors of the Bill, which difficulties were now about to be attempted to be removed. The defects of the former Bill had been pointed out by an honourable member of that House, of whose judgment there were not two opinions; as little variety of opinion did he believe existed as to the integrity of his principles; that gentleman had pointed out the defects of the late Bill. However, no enquiry was made into the defects which were then pointed out; and now the minister came forward with a motion for leave to explain and amend that very Bill, thereby acknowledging its defects. His ideas of the Bill were, that it could never be amended so as to become an useful measure to this country, and therefore he should beg leave to move an amendment to the motion of the minister, which was, that instead of "explaining and amending the Bill," it should be "repealed." He should do this, because he thought the execution of the Bill would be impracticable. The only good circumstance about this Bill was, in his opinion, its impracticability; for, could it be carried into effect, its provisions would be intolerable. It was, as he had always thought it to be, a measure of requisition.

quisition. This he said, when he had the honour to propose an amendment, which, however, the wisdom of the House thought proper to negative. The minister now said that this Bill is a measure which will affect only those who have given some proof of their wealth. He believed it would be a Bill that would bear heavily on many persons; that it would call on persons of all ages, and on women and children, to comply with its provisions, and therefore from the very nature of it, would call on a great number of persons to pay for substitutes; now the sum of money which would be thus required, would be very large. It must be observed that there would be many called upon to contribute to the provisions of this Bill, who had not a horse of sufficient size under this Bill, for none could be taken that were not 14 hands and a half. Therefore 35l. for such a horse was a very moderate price, and computing the matter thus, the 20,000 would amount to 700,000l. but taking it only that 12,000 of these should be thus paid for, which appeared to him to be a moderate calculation, in that event the tax upon such persons would amount to 420,000l. This would have been the case under the last Bill; and, unless materially amended, would be the case under the new one. These observations, he knew, did not apply to persons possessed of affluent fortunes, but the Bill affected those who were very far from being in such a condition, and on whom it would be an intolerable burden. It was much more severe than any other of the burdens that were yet imposed, great and heavy as they were. In short, the objections he saw to this measure, were such as to justify him in the opposition he gave to it; and therefore he moved an amendment to the minister's motion, which was, that of leaving out the words "explain and amend," and inserting the word "repeal."

The question being put, the House divided:

<i>Ayes</i> (for the amendment)	27
<i>Noes</i> (against it)	148

Majority . . . 121

Mr. *Rose* brought up a Bill for more effectually securing stamp duties on indentures, bonds, leases, and other legal instruments; read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time.

The Bill for granting a duty on goods conveyed by inland navigation, was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time the next day.

Agreed

Agreed to go into a committee of the whole House the next day, on the Bill for additional duties of Customs.
Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, *December 14.*

After the private business was disposed of,

The *Bishop of Salisbury* took the oaths, and his seat.

Two petitions were presented against the Trent and Mersey canal bills; the first by the Bishop of Litchfield, from certain potteries in Staffordshire; and the second by the Bishop of Bristol, on the part of the Earl of Uxbridge.

Their Lordships then heard Mr. Anstruther, at considerable length, as counsel for the respondent, in the adjourned Scots appeal, Pringle versus Dove. Mr. Adam, for the appellant, made a short reply.—After which,

The *Lord Chancellor* rose, and at some length, took a view of the circumstances of the case; and then stated the law applicable to it. He was decidedly of opinion, that the judgment of the Court of Session was ill-founded; and therefore moved, "That the interlocutor made in the said case be reversed." Which, on the question being put, was unanimously agreed to by their Lordships.

At six o'clock the House adjourned till Friday.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, *December 14.*

Mr. *Alderman Combe* stated, that he was informed from respectable authority, that the new duties on Customs and Excise were exacted in consequence of the resolution of the House of Commons; and he wished to know whether this proceeding was authorised from the Treasury before the passing of the bill?

Mr. *Rose* said, that no order from the Treasury had been issued authorising the Custom-house officers to exact the new duties; that they were merely authorised to give a notice to the merchants, and that it would be for the consideration of the House whether the duty ought to attach from the day of the passing of the resolution, or of the passing of the bill.

Mr. *Long* brought up some papers from the Treasury, containing the correspondence which passed between Mr. Long and Mr. Boyd about the money advanced to the Emperor,

ror, together with an account of the interest paid by his Imperial Majesty upon the loan of four millions and a half.

MONEY ADVANCED TO THE EMPEROR.

Mr. Fox said, notwithstanding the importance of the subject of this evening's discussion; the apparent sense which the House seem to entertain of its magnitude, from the general attendance which is given; the conversation which it has excited out of doors; and the decision which has been this day passed by a respectable public body upon the measure to which it refers; notwithstanding, I say, all these considerations, I shall deliver all the observations which I mean to make, by way of preface to the motion that I shall have the honour to propose, without trespassing for any length of time upon the patience of the House. And the reason is shortly this, that much of the argument has been stated and anticipated in the two debates to which the subject has already given rise. Besides, upon the fundamental point, or the principle which the question involves, I shall think it much more becoming in me as a British subject, and as a Member of Parliament, to assert rather than to argue, studious not to weaken the constitution by stating as doubtful what it has recognized as one of its leading features. The grand principle to which I refer, Sir, is that this is a limited and not an absolute Monarchy, and that it is the privilege of the House of Commons alone, not only to levy taxes and impose burthens upon the people, but to judge of the whole expences of the state; as well of the mode in which they ought to be applied, as of the manner in which they ought to be raised. I trust that this general principle is so universally acknowledged, that I shall not be called upon to come forward in its defence. I trust that in these times, and in this House, I shall not hear a doctrine which was received at an earlier period, and which I have since seen revived in writings lately published; that I shall not, I say, hear it contended that the disposal of the public money is a secret which ought not to be entrusted to a public assembly, but that one or a few individuals are much more competent to manage and direct the pecuniary concerns of the British nation than a British House of Commons. That an absolute government may be attended with some advantages which the government of a free state may not possess, I am ready to allow. But were I called upon to argue the question (which I think is entirely foreign to the subject of this night's discussion), laying aside all consideration of the blessings of Liberty, and laying aside all

all the energy of character which it is so eminently calculated to produce, I think I should have no difficulty in proving that, merely for the sake of external relations and for the purpose of carrying on wars, even upon this narrow ground, setting out of view all the collateral advantages of freedom, there is enough, *ceteris paribus*, to turn the scale in favour of a free constitution. This, however, is a question which I hope I am as little called upon by the sentiments of the House as by the subject now before them to discuss. I hope and trust that the principle of freedom is recognized as a principle of the constitution, and that as a constitutional principle it is received as just, political and wise. I presume, however, it will be contended that though the principle be established, it is not invariable; that though it generally obtains in the management of the affairs of government, still it is liable to some exceptions. I certainly am not disposed to deny that it has been the practice of the House and of the constitution sometimes to deviate from the line of operation which this principle prescribes. It may be argued, and I do not controvert the fact, that, from the nature of our continental connections, and that, when our arms are employed in foreign service, it is impossible precisely to state by estimate the amount of the expence of any separate measure, or of any particular line of operation. And hence it may be truly inferred, that extraordinaries have become necessary to be voted to cover the expences exceeding the estimates which parliament has voted, and that even these being found insufficient to provide for incidental emergencies, it has been usual to pass a vote of credit to the minister, to be applied according to his discretion, to such unforeseen conjunctures as may arise. In either of the cases, however, it cannot be said, that the money is either levied or applied wholly without the consent of parliament, since, in the one case it voted the service and only mistook the estimate, and in the other it voted the money, confiding in ministers for the wisdom of the application. And it must be remembered that these are exceptions from the principle, not the act of the constitution; that they are necessary evils which can never be extended beyond the necessity in which they originate, without some degree of criminality in the persons who multiply them. It is not very pleasant to quote a passage from the writings of an author even in his absence, but much less when he is present, particularly when he has not an opportunity of explaining his own sentiments. My respect for the author, in the present instance, however, is

such, and the sentiments which he has expressed in the work to which I refer, seem to me to be so forcible and just, that I feel I should be doing injustice to my argument were I to refrain from quoting them. Most gentlemen, I believe, will have gone before me in supposing that I refer to a work, entitled *Precedents of Proceedings in the House of Commons*, by a very respectable gentleman, Mr. Hatfield, one of the clerks of this House.

Speaking of these exceptions to the general principles of the House of Commons, that able author thus delivers his opinion :

In all the different services, the navy, the army, and the ordnance, there has always been an exceeding, or debt contracted upon each, which has been brought before parliament in a subsequent session, under the title of navy debt, or of extraordinary incurred and not provided for. Formerly these exceedings were confined within some limits, as appears from the account entered in the journals during the war of the succession; and even in the war which terminated in 1748. In what is commonly called the German war, these sums first became very large; but in the late war, carried on in America, they exceeded all bounds. There was a degree of negligence or extravagance, or both, in those who had the conduct of this department, which rendered all the votes of the House of Commons, or bills for appropriating the supplies, ridiculous and nugatory. The sums demanded, upon the head of Extraordinaries of the Army incurred and not provided for, during this period, fell not very much short of the whole sums voted by parliament upon estimate for that service; nay in the year 1782, they appear to have actually exceeded them. This was such a shameful prostitution of the money of the publick, that though perhaps the distance, and magnitude, and nature of the American war might be pleaded as some alleviation and excuse for the generals abroad who commanded or for the ministers at home who ought to have controuled those commanders—nothing can justify the House of Commons, who permitted this practice to continue uninterrupted through several sessions; and whose more immediate duty it was to have examined into the contracts and other services, pretended to have been performed, and to have pointed out and punished those frauds and abuses, which were afterwards with no great difficulty detected by the Commissioners of Publick Accounts. The general power which was given by the resolution of the 3d April, 1734, to the ministers, was a measure entirely subversive of the rules of Parliament, and contrary to the practice which has been wisely established since the revolution, of appropriating the supplies to the services for which they have been voted.

We see therefore, that this proceeding did not pass without much difficulty and debate; and that soon after another, and so far as it was limited, a better mode was adopted, which, though it gave the minister credit for the manner of disposing of the money voted, confined that credit to a precise and special sum.

It

It is therefore incumbent upon the House of Commons, not only to make this supply as small as possible, but in a subsequent session to enquire into the particular expenditure of this sum; and to be assured that it is strictly applied to those purposes for which it was intended, and not squandered loosely, improvidently, wantonly, or perhaps corruptly.

I am happy to observe also, that since this passage was quoted last year (by the Marquis of Lansdown), the book has undergone a new edition, and that the author in reviewing and republishing his valuable work has seen no reason to alter his opinion upon the constitutional danger of granting large votes of credit, and of voting great sums under the head of extraordinaries, which might have been previously provided for by parliament. Having laid down this principle then and admitted the exception, I hope I shall not be accused of pursuing an argument which would operate as an objection to all extraordinaries. All I contend is this; that they are an evil, but an evil which may sometimes be unavoidable, or in other words, that they are a mischievous exception to the principle of the constitution.

The fact is, that when extraordinary expences are incurred, and are to be immediately defrayed, they are defrayed from money voted for estimated services; when the House consider it is in this point of view, they will see to what a dilemma every member of parliament must be reduced in this particular instance. He must determine to approve of an expence, which possibly his judgment may condemn, or he cannot prevent the expence that has been incurred, and if he negatives it, so much of the extraordinaries will remain undefrayed. I will suppose for the sake of my argument that one million has been sent to the Emperor. The House think that it ought not to have been sent. What happens in such a case? Can the million be brought back? No. But in fact the House, by their vote, defraud the extraordinaries of a supply equal to the sum advanced to the Emperor. But this is said to be an evil; granted. Why then it is fair to argue that if this fatal necessity of extraordinaries is so against the constitution, that it not only trenches upon the principles of the constitution, but puts every member into the dilemma which I have adverted to. What is the consequence? That there ought to be no extraordinaries? Well would it be for us, if we could do without them; but the consequence is, that they ought not to be extended unnecessarily, and above all, that in the present case, they should not have been incurred, without having been referred to the previous discussion of parliament.

The measure now before the House involves two questions : in the first place, whether it was an expence fit to be incurred? And secondly, ought it to have been incurred in the mode in which it actually has been incurred, or to have been previously submitted to the decision of parliament? On the first question I shall not enter into any discussion. And, after I have guarded the House against considering it as my opinion, I shall suppose on this day, that it was an expence proper to be incurred. With this *caveat*, then, let it be taken for granted, for the sake of argument, that it was a wise and prudent measure to remit 1,200,000*l.* to the Emperor; yet we have still this important question to decide; ought the sum to have been issued in the manner in which it was? And, in the first place, it was not an expence respecting the extent of which we could have been uncertain. Had the remittances been numerous, and the services for which they were destined been of a complicated nature, it might have been difficult to ascertain with precision the amount of the sum to be granted, but there could be no difficulty in determining the sum which it was proper for this country to grant either to the Emperor or the Prince of Conde. I would beg to be informed why after the country had been in the practice, year after year, of maintaining emigrant corps, when it was in meditation to send supplies to the army of the Prince of Conde, the intention was not communicated to parliament, or why a precise estimate, which might have been very easily formed of that head of expence, was not submitted to the House along with the other estimates for the year? It would be a miserable answer indeed to say, that the amount of the expenditure could not be made out; for this same answer might be given in many cases of votes of credit and extraordinaries of the army and navy.

This argument seems to me to be so strong, that really I cannot conceive any member of parliament can understand the fact without seeing that in the present case, to rank the expence in the class of extraordinaries, was in good truth as Mr. Hatsel says, to go the length of rendering votes in the House of Commons absurd and ridiculous, and all the laws of appropriation nugatory and void. To apply the vote of credit to defraying this expence, was as strange and unconstitutional.

When gentlemen are informed that so early as December, 1795, two hundred thousand pounds were issued to supply the army of the Prince of Conde, upon what vote of credit will they naturally suppose the money to have been raised? It must be considered as an unforeseen expence, else it ought

not

not to have been placed to the account of the vote of credit. From what vote of credit then is it natural to suppose that an unforeseen expence occurring in December, 1795, should be defrayed? One would certainly suppose from the vote of credit for 1795. No such thing. It was defrayed from the vote of credit for 1796. What then was the conduct of the right honourable gentleman? In February, 1796, he came down to the House of Commons and said, after all the taxes which I have levied, and all the burthens which I have imposed upon the country, and grievously the people will no doubt feel them, they are not sufficient to answer all the exigencies of the state, and I must have credit for two millions and a half more, to meet the occurrences of unforeseen services, not, you will observe, to supply the deficiencies of former estimates, but to be applied expressly for the purpose of answering unexpected, but possible demands. But what does the honourable gentleman do? The first use he makes of the vote of credit is to pay a remittance of 200,000*l.* to the Prince of Conde's army in December, 1795, and which parliament knew nothing about. By way of illustration, I shall suppose that a gentleman was leaving his House in town to go to the country, or his House in the country to come to town; and that he called his steward, and gave him a sum of money for the purpose of paying the servants their wages when they became due, and of paying the taxes when they were called for. The steward, we shall suppose might say, Sir, "All this is very proper, but on an establishment so extensive as yours, many expences in repairs, charities, &c. may occur for which I am not provided." In consequence of this representation the gentleman gives him 200*l.* or 300*l.* more. But what would he think of his steward, if instead of keeping this 200*l.* or 300*l.* in reserve for unforeseen exigencies, he applied the sum to the payment of debts which he had formerly contracted, and of which he kept his master ignorant. Not to use any coarser language, he would certainly consider him as a steward who was no longer worthy to be trusted. The analogy holds good in the conduct of the right honourable gentleman in applying the vote of credit for defraying expences formerly incurred, and which he kept secret from parliament. This is something, but it is not all. There were some suspicious circumstances in the time and manner in which the vote of credit was applied for. My honourable friend (Mr. Grey), who apprehended something
incorrect,

incorrect, I remember well, was accused of being extremely suspicious, though his suspicions were certainly very far from coming near to the reality, if they could be called suspicions, which formerly, in parliamentary language, would have been termed a watchful jealousy of the conduct of administration, but the language of parliament has suffered the change of its constitution; and he was then deemed a suspicious man. In addition to this, gentlemen were to recollect then when the vote of credit was applied for, the House of Lords did not adjourn till an unusual hour, that they might expedite the passing of it; and therefore after the passing of it *de facto*, it might be supposed that they would come round again, and all have been right. This was not the case however? It was matter of surprise to my honourable friend, as well as to myself, that application should be made for a vote of credit at so early a period of the year, and admitting that it could be applied retrospectively, it was certainly not too much to expect that in the disposition paper which was produced in April, some account should have been given of the application of a sum which had actually been employed to cover an expence incurred in the preceding year. No such account, however, was given in that paper. Now, Sir, I ask, what was this but a direct fraud upon the publick? Supposing, for argument's sake, that there was a difference between the money sent to the army of the Prince of Conde and the sums sent to the Emperor, (though there certainly was no material difference, for it signified little whether we supplied an army which the House of Austria would otherwise have paid and supported, or whether we sent money to the House of Austria to enable it to pay and support that army.) I wish gentlemen to attend a little to the debates of last sessions of parliament, and to the subjects of publick discussion. They will recollect that there were several circumstances connected with the loan which attracted attention. There is one circumstance which it is material to recollect; the terms upon which it was raised gave rise to a good deal of discussion, and they were justified upon several grounds, one of which was, that we were not to consider it merely as a loan; that a quantity of navy debt was to be funded, and that there might be an occasion for a loan of three millions for the Emperor. From this I certainly inferred, that if a loan was to be given to his Imperial Majesty, that the House of Commons would be consulted, both respecting its propriety and extent; that Ministers never

ver would have taken it upon them to grant pecuniary succours to any foreign power, without the consent of parliament; that those who were averse to the measure would have an opportunity of publicly opposing it; and, if it was carried, that at least it would not be adopted till it had assumed a legal and constitutional shape. I heard it also rumoured, upon what I considered to be very good authority at the time, that there were some people connected with the bank who had stated the danger of sending so much specie out of the kingdom; and that there were many gentlemen who were acquainted with the financial state of the country who would have opposed such a step, not upon political grounds, but upon their knowledge of the state of public credit. In the course of the session questions were put to the honourable gentleman several times upon the subject. The answers were not very decisive, but they led me to conclude, that if the measure was in contemplation, the house of Commons would certainly be consulted upon it, before it was finally adopted. Parliament was not consulted, and the period arrives when we find that money actually was sent to Germany. And here, for the sake of argument, I shall also admit that it was expedient, that it was wise, that it was necessary to send money to the Emperor; that it was necessary for the salvation of Germany, and that the salvation of Germany was necessary to that of Great Britain. This necessity then arose during the recess, and if they considered it as so imperiously urgent as not to admit of the delay of calling parliament before the money was sent, why did they not assemble parliament to inform the publick of what had been done, and to petition for a Bill of indemnity? Perhaps they will say, that that might be done as well at the usual period of the meeting of parliament; that after the money was granted, it was unnecessary to assemble them for the purpose of informing them of a measure already adopted; that when they sent the first remittance they had no idea of sending a second; and that when the second was sent, they did not conceive that a third would be necessary; and so on. Well: the 27th of Sept, arrived, when the King had summoned parliament to meet. One would have thought that now their own time was come, they would have condescended so far as to communicate the secret. But no such communication is made. And now I find that, the sum of 70,000*l.* excepted, all the rest of the money was furnished *since the meeting of parliament*. I call then upon the House to ask how this can be justified. Sir, I
ask

ask how ministers, when parliament was sitting, could presume clandestinely, to send money to the Emperor without either informing or consulting the House of Commons upon the subject? I ask, if there be any possibility of answering the question to the satisfaction of the House of Commons of Great Britain, if they are not resolved tamely and pusillanimously to surrender the most sacred and important privilege that has been conferred upon them by the constitution? I trust that I shall not hear the argument which was employed in a former debate restated on this evening; that secrecy was observed for the purpose of restoring the credit of the country. This is too flimsy an argument to impose upon even the most superficial thinker; to what motive then is the conduct of ministers to be ascribed? I can account for it upon only one of two grounds. The first and most natural, I confess, appears to be, that it was their intention to take advantage of the universal satisfaction which was occasioned throughout the country by the successes of the Imperial arms, to establish a precedent against the constitution, by disposing of a sum of money in an unconstitutional mode upon a favourite object, and thus to set an example to future ministers to employ the publick money as their judgments may direct, or their caprices dictate, without consulting the wisdom or acknowledging the authority of parliament. The only other ground on which they can attempt to justify their conduct is, that the minister of the King is a better judge than the House of Commons of the propriety, the extent and the period for executing any publick measure! The honourable gentleman knew for certain whether it was proper or improper to grant pecuniary succours to the Emperor; he knew the specific sum which it was proper to send, and the precise period for remitting it: but, had the House of Commons been consulted, they would not have been proper judges; they would have been for sending either too much or too little; for sending it either too hastily or too tardily. Such a defence, Sir, for I may say so without incurring the imputation of meaning to detract from the abilities of the right honourable gentleman, instead of extenuating, is an aggravation of the offence. I ask, if a British House of Commons will bear to be told by a minister, not only that he is a better judge than they of the prerogatives of the crown, which he did with so much arrogance in 1784, but that he is the best judge also of the privileges of the people? If the case was difficult, Why
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did he not come to the House of Commons for instruction? If the case was delicate, why did he not depend upon the wisdom of the House of Commons for direction? If Germany was to be saved by the money of the people of Great Britain, why were not the House of Commons the saviours? For I will never suppose that upon subjects of supply, the House is not wiser than any man that can be appointed by the crown. I ask him, whether he believes that the House of Commons would have sanctioned a loan to the Emperor, or that they would not? If he thought that they would, why did he not apply to them? If he conceived that they would not, why did he dare, not only to usurp their authority, but to trample upon their privileges; to dispose of the money of the nation, not only without their consent, but in direct contradiction to the will of Parliament? It is pretty well known that I have no great opinion of the publick spirit of the last Parliament, and I do believe, that after what they did to extend the influence of the crown, and to infringe upon the liberties of the people, after their persevering support of a war, as disastrous in its consequences as it was unjust in its origin, after their blind and obstinate confidence in ministers, by whom they were deceived and misled, and after the grievous and intolerable burthens they imposed upon the people, I do believe, I say, that notwithstanding the general idea of the danger of exporting specie, the influence of the crown would have carried even this question. I am persuaded, however, it would have been attended with more than ordinary difficulty, and that Parliament would at least have hesitated before they gave their assent.

I now come to the most important part of the discussions, viz. the consideration of the dates when these remittances were made, &c. Will the honourable gentleman pretend to say, that he was not aware during last parliament, that there would be any necessity for the measure. I will ask him, when he considers the debt as having been contracted, whether, when the Bills were drawn by Colonel Crawford, or when the money was issued? If he considers the debt as contracted, when the money was issued, the Emperor might have received it all, excepting about 77,000*l.* as soon, had parliament been consulted, as he did when the money was sent without their concurrence. But, upon the other supposition, which is the more favourable of the two for the honourable gentleman, that the debt was contracted when the Bills were drawn, and that it was necessary that the Bills should be drawn during the recess; Well, says the honourable gentleman,

man, was I to take the sense of parliament upon the payment of a Bill after permitting it to be drawn?—I answer, that he must still take the sense of parliament, when the question comes to be put upon the payment of the extraordinaries of the army: and that it is then in the power of the House of Commons, if not to stop the payment of that specific sum to the Emperor of Germany, to refuse to cover the deficiency which it has occasioned in the estimated services. One of the Bills I find to have been dated on the 20th of May, and, if I recollect right, the House was prorogued on the 19th. Now, I ask, Did he not foresee, did he not know on the 19th, that this Bill was to be drawn on the 20th? And if he did, which it is impossible but he must have done, I ask, when it was his intention to send money to the Emperor, why he concealed it? When he found that it would be necessary to call upon the country for pecuniary aid to the House of Austria, why he did not inform the publick of the additional burthen which they would be called upon to sustain? When he was compelled to have recourse to the House of Commons for support, why did he not ask for that support in a constitutional manner. Supposing even for a moment, that the urgency of the crisis was such as to render it necessary to draw the bills during the recess, and that Parliament could not refuse to pay them, which is not true (for that was certainly in the power of Parliament), why did he not submit the matter to the House of Commons as soon as they were assembled? I have not had time to calculate the amount of the bills drawn during the recess; but this I know, that the sum of 400,000*l.* has been issued since the meeting of Parliament; and I do contend that it could only have lessened the quantum of the money sent to the Emperor, which would have been no harm, had they thought it proper so to decide, except he was influenced by one or other of the motives before stated, either from a wish to establish a precedent against the constitution, or from an idea that he was a better judge of the extent of the succours that were proper for this country to grant than the House of Commons.

Without entering at all into the question of the propriety of granting these succours, a discussion which I wish on this evening entirely to avoid, I cannot help making an observation upon the relation in which we stand to the House of Austria in pecuniary matters. In 1795, this country guaranteed a loan to the Emperor of four millions and a half. There were many who doubted at the time of the policy of the
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measure, and I recollect well of a noble lord opposite (Lord Hawkesbury) urging in behalf of the good faith of his Imperial Majesty, that he had made good his first payment of the interest due upon the loan. I did not consider it as a very powerful argument at the time, because I know that the money for the first payment of the interest was deducted from the capital, and I shall be still less surprised now to hear of his Imperial Majesty's punctuality in paying the interest upon that loan after we have remitted him 1,200,000*l.* which is three or four times more than any sum of interest which he has to pay to this country. The House ought to be peculiarly interested in this affair, since they were concerned in the guarantee of that loan; or they might find themselves involved too late, for it would be very easy for the Emperor punctually to discharge the interest of it, if they continued to furnish him with more money than was necessary for that purpose. I do not state this as a reason why parliament should withhold succours from the Emperor, but I state it as an additional reason why ministers should be cautious of granting these succours without the sanction of parliament. I have been often accused, Sir, of representing the constitution as in danger. Of these alarms I am willing to take all the shame, and to the crime, if it be any, I readily plead guilty. The oftner that I have thought upon the subject, and the more experience I have of the conduct of ministers, the more I am convinced that my alarms are just, and that my apprehensions are well founded. Upon some measures which I have conceived to be dangerous to the constitution, I allow that there was room for difference of opinion. The question now before the House, however, is not whether the attack is greater or less than those which have been formerly directed against the constitution. It is so bold, so daring, and so destructive of the letter of the constitution, that if it meet the sanction of parliament, the question will be, not how far the constitution is injured, but whether or not we have any constitution at all? It is upon these grounds that I am induced to bring forward the motion which I am about to propose. Many, very many, of the checks upon the prerogative have been removed. The increase of the expenditure of the country, and the accumulation of taxes, have added enormously to the influence of the crown, accordingly that influence never acted so unfortunately against the Commons as in these later periods. When it has been thought necessary to add new and extraordinary powers to the crown; to accumulate new descrip-

tions of treason; to inflict cruel, barbarous, and unheard of punishments for every petty offence against the perogatives; and to arm the crown with an unprecedented military power; in fact, to institute something approaching to a military government, whether these innovations have been necessary or not, I think they are of such a magnitude as to have justified some degree of alarm. But if, in addition to all these new and extraordinary circumstances, there is to be added a direct attack upon the privileges of this House, and 1,200,000*l.* is to be disposed of by the minister, not only in augmentation of expences approved of by parliament, but without obtaining the consent of, or so much as acknowledging parliament, I should be glad to know where there is the smallest safeguard of the constitution left, or what security we can have against the future encroachments, either of a minister, or of a prince, who may be disposed to make them? I am sure the honourable gentleman cannot twist any provision in the vote of credit bill, so as to afford him the smallest pretence for making the application of it, which he has done, and the expence can with less propriety be introduced among the extraordinaries of the army, since it might have been previously voted upon estimate. In both cases whether the money has been paid from the vote of credit, or under the head of army extraordinaries, the honourable gentleman has been equally culpable; in the one case, he has been guilty of a breach of law; in the other, he has been guilty of a breach of trust, and in both he has acted directly contrary to the principles of the constitution. I move, Sir, that the act founded on the vote of credit may be read. [The act being read, *pro forma*, Mr. Fox continued]. Some persons think that in order to repair the breach upon the constitution, a Bill of indemnity ought to be passed; for my own part I am not of such an opinion; I think there is no alleviating circumstance in any part of the conduct of ministers, to entitle them to such indulgence. When the subject was under discussion on a former evening, the honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) instead of soliciting pardon came forward vindicating his conduct, and challenging the House if they dared to find fault with it. I think therefore that an act of indemnity would be improper, because the circumstances have been even a greater outrage upon the constitution (if a greater was possible) than the principle itself. I cannot conceive any proper mode of acting, if it is not for the House to express a plain intelligible opinion upon the measure. I know not what is their opinion, nor do I know the opinion of

of the publick upon it; but this I do know, that he must be sanguine indeed who can hope that the constitution can long survive such an attack, if the authors of it are suffered to pass without any mark of reprehension.

Mr. Fox concluded with moving,

That his Majesty's ministers having authorised and directed, at different times, without the consent, and during the sitting of Parliament, the issue of various sums of money for the service of his Imperial Majesty, and also for the service of the army under the Prince of Conde, have acted contrary to their duty, and to the trust reposed in them, and have thereby violated the constitutional privileges of this House.

Mr. Alderman *Combe* rose to second the motion, but could not give a silent vote upon a subject of so much importance. After what had been advanced by his right honourable friend he would not say a word upon the subject in a constitutional point of view. In obedience to the instructions of his constituents, who had met that day in the common hall of the City of London, and had desired their representatives to censure the conduct of ministers, in giving away the publick money without the consent of Parliament, he said, he had seconded the motion. He spoke of the respectability of the meeting, and of the pride he should always feel in obeying the voice of his constituents, the livery of London, who almost unanimously disapproved of the minister's conduct on the present occasion. And it was with peculiar satisfaction he now followed their instructions, as his own sentiments entirely agreed with their opinion. As the representative of the first commerical city in the world, he was well acquainted with the mischief produced by the money sent to the Emperor. The discounting of the Bills drawn for the purpose of remitting money to the Imperial troops, had swallowed up so much of the money of the Bank, as to compel that great body to narrow their discounts, and the British merchants were made to suffer, that the German troops might be supplied. The remittances to the allied armies on the Continent had in fact been a great cause of the alarming scarcity of money last year, and of most of the embarrassments with which the commerical world had been troubled. Having traced the cause of the scarcity of money to the remittances made to the Emperor alone, and vindicated the mercantile world on the one hand from general want of credit, and the Bank on the other from penuriousness in its discounts, he next adverted to the professions which had been so recently made by mem-
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bers of Parliament, of love and respect for the constitution, which he hoped had not already evaporated, a proof of which he trusted gentlemen would give on the present evening. He professed to be attached personally to no man, nor to have any prejudice against any of the members of administration. He voted with Mr. Fox, as a friend to human happiness, which was best secured by political liberty, and he declared on that evening he came down, to use the phrase of a right honourable gentleman, impregnated with the sense of his constituents, which had that day been so fairly and decidedly given in the common hall.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, Sir, when I consider the nature of the motion which is this day brought forward by the right honourable gentleman against his Majesty's ministers, and the serious charge which it involves, I must regard myself as particularly implicated in that charge, as possessing a particular share of responsibility in the conduct of that measure which is censured as a violation of the constitution, and a breach of the privileges of this House. I have, however, in the discussion of this question every thing to expect from the candour and justice of the House. An imputation of a most serious kind has been advanced against his Majesty's ministers, but it is necessary that all which may be offered on both sides should be fairly heard, before any decision can take place. It is requisite that gentlemen should be in full possession of every important fact that can be adduced, before they hasten to a conclusion which necessarily involves in it matter of such weight and magnitude. The House should clearly know the general principles on which it is to decide: it should know the grounds on which the theory of this part of the constitution is erected: it should also know, what the particular instances are in point of practice that militate in a certain degree against the general principles. I say, Sir, when these considerations are once known, it will then be incumbent on the House to decide. But I trust it will not be denied, that until these points are completely and satisfactorily ascertained, the House ought with every view to propriety, to suspend its determination. It is no small object of satisfaction to me, that the full review of former precedents with respect to the present motion, forms a chief ground of it. In such an application of facts, I have considerable reason to be pleased, and I trust I shall clearly demonstrate before I sit down, that former precedents concur in justifying the measure which is at this moment so severely condemned. I am, however, not a little surprised
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to hear the language made use of by an honourable magistrate, (Alderman Combe), who has declared that he has received instructions from his constituents to join in a vote of censure against his Majesty's ministers, for having supplied the Emperor with money without the authority of Parliament. It appears extraordinary, that any man should state the instructions of his constituents, as a justification of his conduct in concurring in a vote of a criminal charge. I think it must be admitted, that it was impossible for the honourable gentleman's constituents to decide in a just and candid manner, on the propriety of giving a vote on a motion, with the particulars of which they must have been unacquainted, and more peculiarly as they must have been totally ignorant of the defence which his Majesty's ministers meant to set up. I have, Sir, to caution the House against those constitutional doctrines which have been maintained in former debates, and particularly on Thursday night last. But without entering into a minute refutation of them, or stating those which I conceive to be strictly just, I cannot help observing, that much is saved for my purpose by the concessions which the right honourable gentleman himself has made. I certainly do not wish to goad the right honourable gentleman into the former opinions he has at different times maintained: I am better content to take his present statements: I am better content with what I have heard from him to-day, and with those general principles which have fallen from him in support of his motion. For as on a former occasion, when the present subject was first started, the interval of one night made him see the measure more inflammatory than it really is; it now appears that a pause of a few days have diminished his ideas of the inflammatory tendency which, in his own opinion, it possessed. The right hon. gentleman has taken great pains to lay down the great constitutional principles with regard to pecuniary grants, and the use of these grants. I did understand on a former night, that the honourable gentleman told us one thing, to which he said there was no exception, namely, that no expence could be incurred without the consent of Parliament. I did not altogether subscribe to that doctrine, and I will state, as near as possible, the very words of the argument I then used in answer. I argued, that the practice of extraordinaries had been adopted at different periods of the history of the country, at periods the most approved in the history of the country, at least at periods which the honourable gentleman must naturally think the most approved

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ved, when he was himself in the administration. Extraordinaries, to a large amount, were used during the sitting of Parliament, and Parliament afterwards justified the act by a vote. The honourable gentleman did then admit, that he never could be supposed to have said that extraordinaries could not be used without the consent of parliament, previously obtained; but when ministers have now adopted the same measure, the propriety of which the honourable gentleman said, he could not be supposed to deny; yet such is his alarm, that he cannot feel himself justified in pausing a moment on the necessity of the actual condemnation of ministers.

However, Sir, it is enough for my purpose to admit, that, according to the fundamental principles of the constitution, all grants must proceed from the Commons; that they are afterwards subject to their controul, is a principle undeniable: But although the Commons are possessed of the power of controuling the application of the supplies raised by them, yet it is a circumstance proved to demonstration, by practice and general observation that it would be impossible to carry on any wars, that it would be impossible for government to proceed with due regard for the publick safety, or with advantage for the public service, if extraordinaries were not raised by Parliament. In point of practice, it is evident they have been raised. Those great writers, who have written on the subject subsequent to the revolution, prove that extraordinaries have always been used from that period. I desire to refer to the practice of the whole of the succession of administrations, from the days of King William down to the present time, when the principles of the constitution are become infinitely more definite, and when, owing to ambition on the part of France, publick expences and the transactions of finance have attained a greater magnitude; and I ask, whether from that period down to the present, the practice of extraordinaries has not been recognized, and admitted? I do not mean of extraordinaries only, but of extraordinary services during the sitting of Parliament. I do not state this, as if there was only one or two solitary precedents, but as the uniform practice of all the wars in which this country has been engaged; and that during such wars the extraordinaries have been precisely of the description I have stated. Sir, our constitution is one which rests on great and leading principles, but still no one would wish that the constitution should experience any injury by pushing those principles to a rigid and extreme excess; If we are to
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look into the record books of the constitution, we shall find certain principles laid down, which seem to contradict many acts of parliament, which are held as strictly legal. If we examine the law of parliament, we shall find, that it is derived principally from the general tenor of the whole of the principles of the constitution, illustrated by the particular urgency and necessity of circumstances. If this is the true way which men ought to study the constitution, by applying the principles of it to the exigency of circumstances, let me repeat what I stated on a former night, with respect to the impossibility of the measure being wrong, which was done in conformity to the best and most approved principles, as adapted to peculiar events; and let me also ask, how a measure can deserve to be loaded with obloquy and reproach, which in truth is no more than has been the practice of every administration, at those periods when we have been most proud of the constitution? I might remark, that the honourable gentleman, in the course of his speech, has admitted such to have been the practice, because he has himself acted upon it; yet I must admit that the hon. gentleman, when he stated that such was the practice, observed, that because extraordinaries were consonant to practice, that it was no reason they should be extended so far, if it could possibly be avoided. The honourable gentleman, if I understand him right, by that very mode of argument, of the extension of the extraordinaries being attended with so much the more mischief, does, in fact, admit the exception to the principle which he charges me with having violated, and, in short, destroys in effect the very principle he before admitted. He told us that every extraordinary service involved the breach of the pledge to satisfy former estimates, by removing the means of paying them to some other service. If his doctrines mean to infer that extraordinaries ought not to be unnecessarily extended, I cannot but perfectly coincide with him: but if his argument has for its object that of rendering all extraordinaries invidious, I hope, in such case, I may be allowed to guard the House against the effects of attending too much to topics opposed to the very same principles which he has before admitted. That extraordinaries are liable to the future observation and controul of Parliament, is true; but Parliament has at all times felt, that it is necessary, for the publick safety, that ministers should have the power of using extraordinaries, without appealing to Parliament, provided that power, and the

means by which those extraordinaries are incurred, are subject to future discussion.

But it is not the question of extraordinaries only that arises. Parliament, finding the impossibility of reducing every thing to estimated expences, has introduced the practice of giving votes of credit, with the power, generally, to apply them as exigencies might require. As far as it has been possible to provide against extraordinaries, which always hitherto has been impracticable, every endeavour has been exerted; but it is a circumstance in which Parliament have certainly acted with great wisdom, that it has not thought proper at any time to interfere with respect to the amount of the sums which ministers might think necessary for supplying the extraordinaries, but merely to make ministers responsible for the application of the sums, and the necessity of the extraordinaries, to the payment of which they are directed. Before I say any more, I will only observe, that it is not likely I should be one to dispute the propriety of the measure of providing for the extraordinaries by the extent of the vote of credit, if such a thing could be adopted; I have often heard it made a matter of reproach to me, that I endeavoured to estimate every expence and provide for it beforehand. The votes of credit were always smaller in former wars than in the present. In the present war, I have added to the vote of credit other provisions for the purpose of providing for the extraordinaries beforehand. I may therefore be considered as having done all in my power towards endeavouring to take the previous authority of Parliament. What then do I say, that there is no difference between a vote of credit and extraordinaries? As to the vote of credit, I conceive it to be a privilege granted to his Majesty's ministers to employ a given sum to any such purpose as the exigency of affairs shall require. There is no circumstance, however, unforeseen, there is no purpose, be it what it may, no possible event in which ministers may think it requisite that a vote of credit is not applicable to. No expences upon sudden emergencies, which do not come within the spirit of a vote of credit, subject however to that principle which I shall state. (*Here Mr. Grey took notes of what fell from the Chancellor of the Exchequer.*) I observe an honourable gentleman taking notes of what I have just mentioned, and by his manner he seems to express disapprobation. I only hope he will not interrupt me, till he has done me the honour to attend to the whole of what I say, when I have no doubt but I shall be able to convince him I

am right. Have I said that because a vote of credit is applicable to every publick service, that there is no question of responsibility? Have I said there is no principle of respect, of attention, of deference to Parliament? I trust I have neither said, nor at any one moment of my life have failed to shew by my conduct, that such responsibility does exist. I know that for every exercise of that discretion, regularly given by the act, founded upon the vote of credit, ministers are subject to the same responsibility as for the exercise of every other discretion, which permanently belongs to them as ministers of the crown, and which they are bound to use for the safety, the welfare, and the dignity of the country: a discretion, the more important, as it relates to the disposition of the publick money; and I trust Parliament will not lose sight, that it is their duty to weigh those unforeseen difficulties, on which alone government can use the powers with which it is entrusted.

But, Sir, I do not mean to stop here; I do not mean to say that government ought not to be questioned as to the propriety of the measures it may think proper to recur to. I have admitted its liability to be censured. I will admit, that if at that time of using a vote of credit, ministers foresee any expenditure which appears likely to be of consequence, either with respect to its amount, or the importance or peculiarity of the subject, if it admits of a precise estimate, and if the subject is of such a nature, that it can be divulged without injury or inconvenience to the public, I should readily admit that that minister would fail in his duty to parliament, that he would not act according to the sound principles of what I believe to be the constitution of the country, if he were not to state the nature of the emergency, and endeavour to estimate the expence; but if from the nature of the exigency, it should be impolitic to divulge it, in that case, I conceive the minister justified, who conceals it from parliament till a future season. By these principles, as to the general question, I am satisfied that my merits or demerits should be tried; If I have, in the opinion of the House, departed from the principles of the constitution, then I have committed an error in judgment: If through an error in judgment I have departed from the principles of the constitution, I admit I ought to receive the censure of the House, notwithstanding that error proceeded from my having felt it my irresistible duty, in common with the rest of his Majesty's ministers, to act upon principles which I conceived the best calculated to ensure the prosperity and advantage of

the country. Let me not be supposed to admit, what the honourable gentleman seems to assume as an instance of candour, namely, that he reserved the question, whether any degree of importance, which might attach to the subject, could possibly be considered an argument for concealing it, or that its importance could make any difference with regard to the estimate of its expence. Of the principle itself, it is not material to say more; but with respect to what the honourable gentleman has stated, I will make this observation. He has said that extraordinaries are admitted on account of indispensable necessity, and that those extraordinaries are such a mischief, that he almost doubts whether they should be suffered at all. I will admit that expence, be it what it will, is indubitably objectionable, and that if the expence arises to a considerable sum, the objection is still stronger; but the greater the expence, the higher is the advance on the responsibility of ministers, and the greater is the inducement for this House to vote to discharge those expences. The only case has occurred which was in contemplation. If it should appear to the House, that in consequence of an unforeseen change of circumstances, the necessity of expenditure was increased; if it should appear that the only opportunity had arrived, in which there was no alternative but that of relinquishing the cause in which the country was engaged, or of advancing the responsibility of ministers; if, I say, this should appear, is it a mark of candour in the honourable gentleman to desire that the urgency only should be put out of the question? Why then, Sir, as to the utility of the advance to the Emperor, whether it could have been made in a more proper form, whether, by a previous application to parliament, it would not have been attended with a greater degree of inconvenience? Whether the advance was not made at a time the most critical that could possibly have occurred? These are questions which I shall shortly proceed to discuss. But, assuming for the present, that there was a difficulty about the mode of doing it, what mode, under similar circumstances, would have been more eligible? In this way it has been tried, and has succeeded; by previously applying to parliament, it is doubtful whether it would have succeeded or not. I entreat gentlemen to recollect the situation of the Emperor, on the continent; the situation of this country, with respect to the prosecution of the war, or of its termination by a safe and honourable peace: I request them to look back to July or August last; a period when we saw with regret
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and apprehension the triumphant arms of the French Republic at the gates of Munich, and the territorial possessions of the Belligerent powers in danger of being wrested from them. When they look back to this period, let them at the same time look back to the determined valour and gallant conduct of the Austrian army, and the inconceivable rapidity with which they compelled the common enemy to forego their advantages, and retreat towards their own country. It may perhaps be a question, how much, or how little, the assurances which the Austrians had of this additional resource, and the possibility of its being equal to carrying them through the campaign, tended to their successes; but that question will be easily solved, when it is considered how much the conduct of Austria must necessarily have depended on the sum furnished by this country. I will ask whether any man can hesitate in determining the utility of the measure of sending nine hundred thousand or twelve hundred thousand pounds, when such advantages have been procured by it? What is it we have given? What do I say? We have in fact only lent a sum of money to a power whom, I shall contend, we have no ground to distrust; and that if we had given more, it has been already amply repaid by the exertion of that power. I would willingly make my appeal again to the public, for I am convinced that public, from the highest to the lowest, have too much regard for their country, to feel the additional burthen of taxes, whatever their individual shares may be, that bring such advantages. I am satisfied, there is not a man in the country that does not feel that he is more than repaid by the security which the success of the arms of our ally has produced; that there is not a man who does not admire the magnanimity and intrepidity of the Austrians; the unshaken mind and nobleness of principle which has actuated the Court of Vienna; that there is not a man who will not be proud that he has been the means of forwarding their exertions, and who will not lay his claim to the merit of having furnished the sinews which have enabled the Austrians to obtain such glorious achievements. I will not think so ill of the good sense of Englishmen, as to suppose that they can regret any trifling expence, which has been the means of obtaining such signal advantages. The question alone is, whether there is any doubt of the exigence of the measure, whether there is any doubt of its necessity, and whether the service would have been performed by a previous statement to parliament?

Here Sir, let me state to this House, or rather repeat

peat what I have shortly stated on a former night. The House will recollect, that from the principles on which I conceive a government should act, it never could have been in my contemplation, or that of his Majesty's ministers, under the vote of credit, to propose advancing the whole of the sum which turned out to be necessary for the Emperor. That it was not my intention, is proved by this circumstance, that at the very period of proposing the vote of credit, a reserve was expressly made for a loan to be specifically brought forward, and submitted to parliament, to a much larger amount than the vote of credit. What inference do I wish to draw? First of all, that it is a pretty clear and evident proof, that it in reality appeared, by the Austrians being so much in want, that his Majesty's ministers had an impression of the necessity of assisting the Emperor. Could they have any motive to hold out a loan, if there was no such thing in agitation? What view could any government have in stating the necessity of an Austrian loan, if they did not see the occasion for one? When we asked for the vote of credit, it was plain we were not asking for a vote of credit for services unforeseen, but that we intended to apply it as it has been applied. Gentlemen will recollect, that on the first loan of eighteen millions, it was stated as uncertain the precise time it would be called for; that the precise time depended on the result of an intercourse between his Majesty and the Emperor, without which it was impossible to settle the extent of it. But it is true, I felt that, in consequence of the extraordinary extent of the drain of money, that some time would be necessary before the influx of trade would be such as to render a measure of that kind practicable in its execution, or safe in its impression; for of all subjects, that which relates to credit, or the stagnation of money, the delicacy of which every man knows, is that in which it is necessary to be particularly circumspect. Now, how does this stand? I was sanguine that a much shorter interval would have diminished the scarcity. Afterwards, at a much later period, I found that it would be impossible to bring forward the loan. Under this impression, I did think it adviseable to take the step I have taken, a short time previous to the end of last parliament. How far that can be fairly imputed to me as a crime, is a question I shall have occasion to discuss. However, this is the first principle of my defence, that when the campaign was advancing, so that the Emperor could not wait for any proof of the reality of his hopes of an increase of pecuniary supply, in conformity to

to what had been done before, and according to principles recognized by parliament, I thought it expedient, for the success of his arms, to send the means of repelling the enemy. Towards the end of last session it appeared to me impossible to bring forward the discussion of the loan. I have not thought proper to argue away the public discussion of the loan, as a very different thing from the advance to the Emperor. I hardly think that will be argued by those who know what were the opinions of monied men. I know that those who argue most against the measure contend, that a public loan, at the time this advance was made, was impossible.

The principal question is, whether this measure has deprived you of any thing you possessed? whether any disadvantage has been the consequence of it, so as to make our situation more embarrassed now than it would have been some months ago, by a loan taking place? I believe the situation of mercantile men, and the pecuniary state of the country is more favourable now than they were at the periods when the several remittances to the Emperor were issued. This I state not merely on the suggestions of any particular member of this House, not merely in consequence of any discovered public opinion; but I state it on evident grounds of reason. Nor can I for a moment suppose that the members of this House, that the publick will long suspend the delegation of their assent to a measure founded equally in the justice and the expediency of the motives which gave it birth. But however this may be, I have on this occasion the satisfaction of knowing that I am not stating my own sentiments only, but also those of the persons who were the contractors for the last loan. The contractors for that loan themselves felt then, and have since communicated to me, the inconveniences that had resulted to commerce in general from the immense, but necessary, drains in the money market. They had felt that any specific proposition to guarantee a fresh loan to the Emperor would have sensibly affected the money market: would have depreciated the funds, and depressed the public credit. Had I upon that occasion adopted the mode of a public loan; had I come to parliament, when parliament first sat to deliberate on public measures; had I, while the necessities of the Empire and the dearest interests of Europe depended in some measure, the one for relief, the other for preservation, on the remittance of certain portions of that sum of 1,200,000l.;—had I in that eventful crisis done any thing that might, in its ultimate consequences, increase the

the difficulties of that ally, endanger and risk the liberties of Europe, what, let me ask, would have been the language of the hon. gentleman, who has this night censured my conduct, and made it the subject of a specific motion? I repeat it: The persons best acquainted with the money market were, at the periods I have mentioned, deeply impressed with a sense of its growing embarrassment, and seriously felt the inconveniencies necessarily concomitant to a state of warfare. They felt those inconveniencies, but they more than felt the justice of the contest which had operated as the cause of them. In their opinion, the pecuniary situation of the country was such as would have rendered the publick avowal of any loan to the Emperor extremely impolitic, and, by an ill-timed discussion of its propriety, have produced those evils I have in part detailed. To them I submitted whether a publick loan would be prudent in such circumstances, but they were unanimous in their preference of the adopted mode. A proof this, that I could have no intention to violate the constitution. That I had not hastily, and immaturely adopted the alternative; that I made those preliminary arrangements; that my enquiries on the subject were as general and earnest as I have this night avowed, is well known, not only to the individuals with whom I consulted, but also my colleagues in the ministry. I appeal, without fear of being contradicted, I appeal to those in my confidence whether such were or such were not my sentiments, whether such was or was not my conduct on that occasion? At this time the situation of the Empire was also so peculiar, that his Majesty's servants could not but have a strong and influencing sense of the impropriety of affording publicly the aid that situation so much required. The arms of the French Republick were victorious in almost every quarter, the Empire threatened with destruction, and Europe with ruin. This was, I own, the reverse of our once favourable hopes; from the exertions of that ally our expectations had been different; but could any temporary reverse of circumstances justify a measure that must have intailed on that ally a permanent mischief? Surely we who had considered ourselves entitled to share in the good fortune of the arms of Austria, would not justly have separated our interests in her adversity. Surely that ally, of whose good faith and candour, of whose steady attachment to the principles of the alliance we had so many and such splendid proofs; that ally, who had almost singly resisted the destructive progress of an impetuous and enthusiastic enemy: yes, the House of Austria

Austria eminently merited our confidence and our esteem. But these were not enough. The empire was in actual danger; her treasury exhausted; and many of her princes forced to abandon her defence. It was in this conjuncture that his Majesty's servants, faithful at least to their sense of the danger, afforded to Germany that assistance which I am proud to say had been in a great measure the means of saving not only that particular empire, but a vast portion of Europe. Actuated by these considerations, thus hurried by existing necessities, to adopt a particular measure, I flatter myself few who hear me will in the end fail to discover, that the act itself, even supposing it to be unconstitutional, could not be the result of a deliberate intention to violate acts of parliament.

The right honourable gentleman has supposed that the measure was to be vindicated as one that had succeeded the successes of the Austrian arms. But that was not the case. The glory of the Austrian successes afforded not any of those reasons which influenced the conduct of the King's ministers. The honourable gentleman has supposed that the measure was now brought forward under cover of the glory of the Austrian successes: but I have to remind that honourable gentleman, and the house, that the resolution of his Majesty's ministers, to assist the Emperor, was taken not under the flattering phantom of delusive glory, not because the house of Austria was resuming, under the auspices of one of its illustrious members, its former spirit, and had regained its ardour; not because the French had been forced to abandon some places, and retreat from others in the German dominions; but their resolution was taken when ministers felt that they had an opportunity of giving to the Emperor, Europe and the country, the best pledge of their sincerity, of their attention to their interests, of their individual integrity, and collective force. The resolution was not taken without serious contemplation of the risk. It was not undertaken without maturely considering every relation, in which it could possibly connect itself with the constitution. It was not undertaken in defiance of law, nor made a solitary exception to all former usage. It was not undertaken to cripple our finances, nor had it either prospectively, or retrospectively, any one thing in common with a deliberate insult to the House. But it was undertaken in a way, and upon an emergency, which warranted the measure. Even the measure was warranted by the former opinions of my adversaries; but especially by the then and present opinion of monied men. I shall perhaps be asked, what

is the difference between a loan in the manner that loan was transacted, and a loan granted in the old and popular way? What the difference between a direct and avowed disbursement of the public money, and an indirect and concealed disbursement? The former I shall, perhaps, be told, must have decreased the pecuniary resources of the country equally with the latter; and have lessened, though in a secret manner, the general means of commercial security. But to this I cannot concede, because the reverse has been the fact. The fact has been, that by remitting money to the Emperor in that season of difficulty, of doubt and danger, his Majesty's ministers have rendered less doubtful the prospects of a safe and honourable peace. Had ministers on that occasion, after being convinced themselves of the necessity and justice of such assistance, and during the recess of parliament delayed the adoption of the conduct they have pursued, instead of affording to the Emperor, the enemy, and Europe, a proof of superior wisdom, and superior resources, it would be a proof of the want of both, by giving the money publicly. By discussing the subject in parliament at the earliest period, if such a discussion could be entered into, not only publick Credit would have been injured, but you would have told the enemy that your difficulties obliged you to stint the acknowledged wants of your allies. To those who thought worse of our resources than I did, to the public mind in general, such a measure in such a crisis would, I know, have been a cause not of rejoicing, but of sorrow; not a source of pleasure, but of pain. Every man who wished well to his country, every man sincerely attached to the principles of the constitution, instead of approving of that assistance being afforded originally as a loan, would have said no, do not commit yourself to your ally, so as to make your necessities a test of his. If, instead of endeavouring to poise and remove the difficulty as I have done, this House had so passed a public loan, such must have been the consequence. I am certain that had parliament been acquainted with the danger of our ally, and had even determined to give the necessary assistance, the publicity of the measure would have defeated the object. So that whether we had or had not been reduced to the alternative of refusing assistance altogether, the event must have produced collateral mischiefs. I may, therefore, I think, ask, will you, upon all occasions pregnant with real danger, yield to amplify and discuss the difficulty, so far as when the safety of your allies, yourselves, and all Europe depend on your assistance, to withhold or render nugatory

gatory that assistance? Will you publickly give such a pledge to an ally, as must render it impracticable for you to give the aid that may be required at home. Pledges of aid, and of instant aid, his Majesty's servants had certainly seen good reason to give to the Emperor. These pledges had been given long before the meeting of parliament, and might justly be considered as very eminently conducive to every measure and every success which has been since adopted and experienced. It is, I know, one among the grounds on which the right hon. gentleman has brought his accusation, that a part of the money was sent previously to the meeting of parliament, and another ground, that money has been sent since its meeting. I own the advance to the Emperor consists of sums sent since the meeting of the present parliament; but I do contend, that the pledges of these sums were the means by which the house of Austria endured adversity, and retrieved its posterity. Had the Emperor, in July and August last, had no assurance of your assistance, I will not say we should have been at this moment a ruined people, but I will say, that the pecuniary security of England, and the territorial security of Austria, had been diminished, if not utterly destroyed.

On a former night, an hon. friend of mine used as one argument, what he thought would be the effect, a public discussion of the measure would have to depreciate the credit of the country; and I own I have not yet heard any one argument, that could induce me to think differently on the subject. The effect of a knowledge of the pecuniary distresses of the Emperor, joined to the difficulty of a prompt supply would have produced, could not fail to bear with peculiarly embarrassing weight on the course of exchange. Whereas the transmission of the sum of 1,200,000*l.* in different sums, and at different periods, tended greatly to relieve the Emperor, and preserve the credit of this country from that depression, which the same sum granted at once, and in the form of a public loan, would have occasioned. I need not therefore enumerate the particular dates of those bills. Our assurance to Austria was not confined to the meeting of Parliament, not subjected to the delays of several months of recess, but it was given with reference to every situation of difficulty or danger in which the arms of the Emperor might be placed by their resistance to the arms of France. When the Austrian troops were retreating from their severe and glorious combat with the French republicans, they surely merited every assistance this country could afford them; but

when, in the career of a brilliant series of the most splendid victories, those gallant men were urged by their emulation of the intrepidity of their invincible officers to acts of unparalleled prowess, his Majesty's servants found themselves particularly called upon, most particularly called upon, to aid and promote their views, to soften their calamities, and to afford them means of securing their important conquests. On the conviction of the propriety of these sentiments, and of such conduct, it was, that the King's ministers had acted. Of the number of those who had been guided by these sentiments, I, Sir, certainly was one not the least active to provide, nor, I trust, the least vigilant to manage prudently that pecuniary stimulus which, during the recess, and at other periods, was given to the arms of the Empire. Our conduct, therefore, Sir, does not respect the months of October, of November, nor December in particular, but it had a clear and unerring relation to every crisis and circumstance, to every moment of danger. In truth the acts themselves were acts performed distinctly in compliance with solemn engagements; they were acts in execution of pledges which had been previously given. Acting during the recess from the conviction that these pledges were given by the letter and the conviction that these pledges were given by the letter and the spirit of the existing treaties, acting after the Parliament was met under the sanction of these treaties, with no intention then, and surely none now, of setting up their own judgments as the standard of, or superiour to the judgment of the House of Commons, ministers, I think, may be permitted to avail themselves of the exceptions of all similar treaties in favour of similar conduct. As to the transaction itself, no separation could fairly be made of the necessity which gave existence to the measure, and the motives which influenced its adoption. Even supposing the judgment of Parliament could have been taken, the state of Germany was such, as could not have left gentlemen one moment to their doubts whether or no it was proper to assist the Emperor. What ministers have done in pursuance of their pledge, was, however, done in a great measure before Parliament could have been assembled to consider its expediency. Of the nature and effect of the services performed by the Emperor, gentlemen may very readily judge. They have them recorded in the annals of very recent periods, annals the most brilliant, perhaps, in the history of the world. Austria, in concert with almost all Europe, had waged war against the avowed enemies of social order; thus, whether

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we judge of the services of Austria in whole, or only in part, I think gentlemen must concede to me that the services of the last three months have been at least such as merit our particular approbation. On this part of the subject I have, therefore, at present, scarcely any thing more to remark. I have, in the best manner I am able, stated to the House the circumstance of that situation which rendered it impossible for Austria to continue her warlike operations without assistance from this country. I have likewise endeavoured to render my own conceptions of the act of sending money to an ally without the previous consent of Parliament. In addition to these, I have submitted to the House those principles, in the practical exertion of which I pursued that line of conduct now so much the subject of the animadversions of the right honourable gentleman.

With this species of defence, I might in some measure content myself: I might, I think, rest my defence on the exigence, and risk its support to the additional aid of those who feel its justice. But notwithstanding this, I should still be wanting in duty to myself, did I not, before I sat down this night, desire the House to keep in memory the principles I have thus stated, as being those on which I acted, If I did not desire the House to compare these principles with my conduct. As to the question of extraordinary, I have heard the idea suggested, and something like an argument attempted to be deduced from it, that if its spirit be adhered to, no part of a vote of credit can be employed to pay foreign troops. I have heard too, that of such an application of the publick money so voted, our annals scarcely afford any, and if any, not apposite precedents. Sir, I think I can instance a number of precedents of this kind, I can instance to this House, Sir, and for the information of the right honourable gentleman, that votes of credit were appropriated by our ancestors to the payment of foreign troops. In times before the revolution, but of those times gentlemen seem unwilling to say much; in the reign, Sir, immediately before the revolution, this very thing had been done by the crown; but, Sir, in periods subsequent to the revolution, in periods not the least favoured in our annals, although certainly not altogether free from the stains of calumny, but especially of party violence; in the reign of King William, during the year 1701, accompanied by circumstances of a singularly important and curious nature, the Parliament voted an extra sum for the payment of foreign forces. This sum was voted not regularly as a vote
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of credit, but it succeeded the granting of a vote of credit, and was a measure which, although it occasioned some trifling opposition, was carried unanimously. Such was the conduct of our ancestors at the revolution. In the reign of Queen Ann, a reign reprehended undoubtedly by some, a reign which had unhappily encouraged, if not occasioned and fomented those differences which rendered the Tories so implacable against the Whigs; in that reign, thus chequered by the persecutions, sanguinary persecutions, first of the Whigs, but latterly, and I will confess with not less cruelty, began and continued by the Tories. In this reign, and in the years, 1704-5, both subsidies and grants had been employed in paying foreign forces. This too was done without the authority of Parliament. In 1706, a transaction more directly characteristic of this, for which the ministers of the present day are censured, was publicly avowed, and as publicly discussed, yet it seems the right honourable gentleman had over-looked it. This at least seems to be the case; or, if known, he certainly ought to have abandoned his assertion. There is to be met with in the annals of the Parliament of that day, an account of three different sums, each considered, by the opposition of that day, as violations of the constitution—a remittance to the Duke of Savoy, to the Emperor, and to Spain. A sum too had been paid in the same manner to the Landgrave of Hesse, for a corps of his troops then in the pay of England. All these sums were not voted regularly after the specific propositions, submitted for that purpose to the House, but were remitted to those sovereigns without the previous consent of Parliament. Not even estimates of the services, for which the sums had been paid, were laid before the House till six weeks after its meeting. The sum sent to the Emperor was peculiarly distinguished—it had been transmitted, not at the close, not during the recess of that session in which it was first announced to parliament, but before the end of the preceding session. These proceedings did certainly attract notice. The House of Commons and the publick, had been addressed on the unconstitutionality of the measure; then as now there had been employed every effort which ingenuity could suggest; every vehicle of publick communication rendered a vehicle of asperity and censure on the conduct of ministers. It became the subject of a solemn discussion. A discussion, apparently not less vehement, than it was laboured and profuse. But how, Sir, did the ministers of that day retire from the combat? Did they retire over-whelmed with the virulence, and abuse, the censure

of the discerning and temperate members of that Parliament? Or were those their actions distinguished by the approbation of the Commons of Great Britain? Sir, the minister of that day had the satisfaction to see the attack of his adversaries repelled, and their expressions of censure changed to approbation. That minister, Sir, heard his conduct applauded, and the journals of this House were made to bear record that the sense of its members was, that the sums advanced to the Emperor on that occasion had been productive not only of the preservation of the empire, but had also supported and maintained the interests of Europe. In the year 1718, in the beginning of the reign of George the first, an instance of the application of the publick money occurred, which, though not so analogous as the last, I think it right to mention it. A message had been received from his Majesty, soliciting the aid of the Commons to make such an augmentation of the actual forces of the country as might be deemed necessary to place it in a respectable state of defence; and that because there had been an appearance of an invasion—At this time his Majesty takes Dutch troops into his pay, and the money voted to raise and maintain native troops is disbursed for the use of a foreign corps. It is true this body of Dutch troops were landed in England, and their services confined to it: but not even these affected much the application of the fact as a precedent. However, Sir, in the year 1734, a period nearer our own times, a general vote of credit was granted. That vote of credit was applied on such occasions, and for such purposes as might at any time, during its existence, arise out of the exigencies of the time. On the 18th of February of the subsequent year, a vote of credit was also granted, and a treaty concluded with Denmark. And, Sir, if I have not totally misconceived the passage of our parliamentary history where these facts are stated, this last, as well as the vote of credit immediately preceding it, was applied to purposes in their nature not unlike those to which necessity impelled the ministers of the present day to apply the vote of 1796. I might also refer gentlemen to another instance of an advance to foreign troops. An advance to the Duke of Arenberg, commander of the Austrian forces, in the year 1742, was noticed in debate, and censured in the administration of Mr. Pelham. A name this as dear to the friends of constitutional liberty as perhaps any he could mention: but the enquiry was avoided by moving the previous question. It happened, however, that not long after the same question was made, the

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the subject of a specific discussion. It appeared that the advance had been made under the authority of an assurance expressed by Lord Carteret, and not in consequence of any previous consent of Parliament; but it appeared also that the progress of the Austrian troops was considerably accelerated by the influence of that aid, and their subsequent successes owing chiefly to it. The vote of censure therefore, which had been founded on the act of Lord Carteret, was amended, and the advance declared necessary to the salvation of the Empire. But, Sir, let us compare the crisis of 1796 with that of 1787, when the expences incurred by our endeavours to protect Holland were recognized under the head of secret services. This, too, was an unanimous recognition of the act which, had it been the offspring of 1796, the right honourable gentleman, influenced by his new opinions, would, I have no doubt, marked with his disapprobation; but so stood the fact then.

The right honourable gentleman avoids no opportunity to express his disrespect for the memory of the last parliament. But surely he ought to recollect, that although he has often told us that the last Parliament completely undermined the constitution, there yet remain principles for which the right honourable gentleman thinks it his duty to contend, under the sanction, he is yet permitted to accuse his Majesty's ministers as criminals for doing that which necessity provoked, and which precedents warrant. Undoubtedly, Sir, I think that whether the people of England will hereafter approve of the conduct of opposition as constitutional conduct, they will admit that it is a vigilant opposition. On the present occasion, however, much of that vigilance seems to me to have been exerted in vain. They have not, with all their industry, fallen even in the way of one precedent, that might have induced some little relaxation of their inordinate zeal. They have not discovered that the act they have marked with every species of obloquy, of which language is capable, is an act that has been again and again approved of. It is even within the admitted principle of successive parliaments. But the members who sat in the last Parliament have not forgot that, when a loan of four millions and a half was proposed to be granted to the Emperor, the intention of granting that loan was known as early as February 1795. A message had been received from his Majesty, stating that a negotiation was pending with the Emperor to maintain 200,000 men. The loan to be granted when the negotiation succeeded, and when it failed, to be mentioned.

Soon

Soon after the answer to this message was communicated to the throne, a motion was made for an account of 250,000*l.* advanced to the Emperor in February 1795; and again a similar motion was made for an account of 300,000*l.* also advanced to the Emperor in the month of May following. With respect to these sums, it was agreed by the House before the loan was debated, that they might be afterwards made good out of the loan. This, Sir, I have stated to shew that members who sat in the last Parliament cannot be altogether ignorant of the principles of the constitution. After the negotiation was concluded, the loan was debated; the House was divided, but no objection was made to these advances. On the subject of the Prince of Conde's army being supplied with money by this country, I can only say, that whatever sums that army has as yet received have been paid, on account of services rendered, as forming a part of the Austrian forces. The circumstance of a part of the 1,200,000*l.* stated as being sent to the Emperor, being afterwards received in this country in part payment of the interest due on the second Austrian loan, is also easily accounted for, these payments, on account of being in their nature the same, as if the Emperor, instead of being so accommodating to himself as to pay the money, by his agent, on the spot, had ordered it to be sent to Vienna, and transmitted it by the same post to this court.

Having stated all the precedents that he thought it necessary to adduce, and argued with equal force and perspicuity on the immediate analogy and close application of several of them, the Chancellor of the Exchequer concluded his speech to the following effect: "If such be the case I ask on what principle of justice a criminal charge can now be brought against me for merely having followed the uniform tenor of precedent, and the established line of practice? By what interpretation of a candid and liberal mind can I be judged guilty of an attempt, want only to violate the constitution? I appeal to the right honourable gentleman himself, who is not the last to contend for the delicacy which ought to be used in imputing criminal motives to any individual, and to urge in the strongest terms the attention, which ought to be shewn to the candid and impartial administration of justice. In what country do we live? And by what principles are we to be tried? By the maxims of natural justice and constitutional law, or by what new code of some revolutionary tribunal? Not longer than a year and a half since the same principle was adopted, and suffered to pass

without any animadversion; and now, at a crisis of ten-fold importance, and where the measure has not out-run the exercise of a sound discretion, it is made the foundation of a criminal charge. We are accused with a direct and wanton attack upon the constitution. It is not supposed that we have been actuated by any but the blackest and most malignant motives. We are not allowed the credit of having felt any zeal for the interest of the country, nor of those advantages which the measure has produced to the common cause. I have now weighed the whole merits of the transaction before the House, and with them I am well content to leave the decision. While we claim a fair construction on the principles and intentions which have guided my conduct, if it shall appear that it has in the smallest instance deviated from any constitutional principle, we must submit to the consequence, whatever be the censure or the punishment. It is our duty, according to the best of our judgement, to consult for the interest of the country; it is your sacred and peculiar trust to preserve inviolate the principles of the constitution. I throw myself upon your justice, prepared in every case to submit to your decision; but with considerable confidence, that I shall experience your approbation. If I should be disappointed, I will not say that the disappointment will not be heavy, and the mortification severe; at any rate however it will to me be matter of consolation, that I have not, from any apprehension of personal consequences, neglected to pursue that line of conduct which I conceive to be essential to the interests of the country and of Europe. But while I bow with the most perfect submission to the determination of the House, I cannot but remark on the extraordinary language which has been used on this question. Ministers have been broadly accused with a wanton and a malignant desire to violate the constitution: It has been stated that no other motive could possibly have actuated their conduct. If a charge of such malignant intention had been brought against men, who have affirmed the present war to be neither just nor necessary, and who on that ground cannot be supposed friendly to its success; who have extolled, nay, even exulted in the prodigies of French valour; who have gloried in the successes of the foes of civil liberty, the, hostile disturbers of the peace of Europe, men who blasphemously denied the existence of the Deity, and who had rejected and trampled on every law, moral and divine; who have exclaimed against the injustice of bringing to trial persons who had associated to overawe the legislature; those who

who gravely and vehemently asserted, that it was a question of prudence, rather than a question of morality, whether an act of the legislature should be resisted; those who were anxious to expose and aggravate every defect of the constitution; to reprobate every measure adopted for its preservation, and to obstruct every proceeding of the executive government to ensure the success of the contest in which we are engaged in common with our allies; I say, if such a charge of deliberate and deep-rooted malignity were brought against persons of this description, I should conceive that even then the rules of candid and charitable interpretation would induce us to hesitate in admitting its reality, much more when it is brought against individuals, whose conduct, I trust, has exhibited the reverse of the picture I have drawn. I appeal to the justice of the House; I rely on their candour; but, to gentlemen who can suppose ministers capable of those motives which have been imputed to them on this occasion, it must be evident that I can desire to make no such appeal."

Mr. *Bragge* followed the minister in order, and in a great degree also in argument, having dwelt for a considerable time, and enlarged on the topics urged in the foregoing speech. With regard to the confidence which was placed in the ministers of the crown, and so much and so frequently declaimed against in that House, it was right he said to distinguish between it and that sort of individual confidence, to which some of the animadversions may, on many occasions, more justly apply. The confidence reposed in the executive servants of government, was, of a publick and constitutional nature, to be exercised for the benefit of the publick, and for the use or abuse of which, they were responsible to that house. This confidence, was far from being unknown in the general administration of government, for surely ministers might with as good, if not much better reason be trusted with the disposal of this vote of credit, subject afterwards to the revision and approbation of Parliament, than the secret service money, of the appropriation of which no account whatever could be demanded of them. Parliament, in passing that vote was sensible that the publick service would be liable to exigencies which could not at that moment be foreseen, and the money was made generally applicable to any exigencies which might arise. The situation of our principal and truly faithful ally produced that exigency; the state of publick credit required that the mode in which assistance was conveyed to him should not be generally canvassed or publickly known, and those combined circumstances

brought on the necessity which fully justified the minister in the measures he had so successfully, and in his mind, meritoriously adopted. This necessity however was stigmatized by the opponents of the minister as the tyrant's plea, whereas tyrants in fact seldom condescend to use any plea at all. The ministers of a free people, entrusted with administering their affairs to the best advantage and to the height of their abilities, were entitled to urge such a plea, conscious, before they acted upon it, that they were subject to be called afterwards to account for their conduct whatever it might be. So placed, and being necessarily invested with a considerable portion of discretion, it was their business to look more to the *spirit*, than the *letter* of their powers: for many things would require, in the progress of events to be acted upon more liberally than may perhaps be warranted by a rigorous construction of the letter of any publick instructions, to which discretion was annexed. It was besides to his comprehension absurd, and inconsistent to make that matter of criminal charge in 1796, which in 1705 was passed over as an expedient and constitutional measure.

Upon the whole his opinion was, that the conduct of the minister so far from meriting censure was highly deserving of the gratitude of the nation; but at the same time he was desirous that such a proceeding, dictated by necessity, should not be drawn into precedent in future, notwithstanding the auspicious consequences with which it was now attended. He concluded with moving an amendment, viz. to leave out from the first word *that*, and to insert

The measure of advancing the several sums of money, which appear from the accounts presented to the House in this session of Parliament, to have been issued for the service of the Emperor, though not to be drawn into precedent but upon occasions of special necessity, was, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, a justifiable and proper exercise of the discretion vested in his Majesty's ministers by the vote of credit, and calculated to produce consequences, which have proved highly advantageous to the common cause, and to the general interests of Europe.

Mr. *Thornton* said, an honourable gentleman had alluded to the transaction of the Bank. The Directors of the Bank, upon a view of the existing circumstances, stated, that a loan to the Emperor at that period, referred to by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would be attended with unpleasant circumstances. Large payments had been made to the army, and they thought it their duty to state their opinion, that until the country had retrieved itself, they were unanimously of
opinion.

opinion that the loan to the Emperor could not be advanced. Upon the last loan of eighteen millions, he had the evidence of Mr. Morgan in stating, there was no consideration for the Imperial loan. In regard to the statement of the honourable gentleman (Mr. Alderman Combe), respecting discounts, he could controvert what he had stated, for the last year the Bank discounted very largely; with regard to the present question, he at first felt some difficulty, whether a bill of indemnity would not be proper, but he was now convinced that the measure stood not in need of justification.

Alderman *Combe* explained.

Mr. Alderman *Lushington* declared, that he should not have risen, but circumstances called upon him for a few remarks. It was true there had been a meeting of his constituents, as was stated by his colleague, and a large majority of that common hall had resolved to give their instructions to support a motion for censuring the ministers; but he declared, that he felt the same congratulation with his honourable colleague. It was, however, for acting differently, for he could never consent to receive instructions to pronounce a verdict, in a criminal case, before he had heard the defence. It was said that the constitution had been violated; the papers on the table would prove the contrary. That money was advanced was admitted; but revert to the vote of credit for a justification. Considering the terms upon which that sum of 2,500,000*l.* was granted to his Majesty for the exigency of the country, he was clearly of opinion that it had been so applied. Look at the connection between Great Britain and his Imperial Majesty: there was a unity of connection and interests so blended, that whatever affected the one, had an equal influence upon the other: the one could not feel distress without the other suffering a share. He would refer to the feelings of the House, and also to the country at large, what were their sensations at the rapid progress of the French arms, when that circumstance was viewed, and the sum balanced against it; the one, compared with the effect it produced, was trifling, and insignificant indeed. It was truly trifling when compared with the magnitude of the war: A war not of conquest, not begun for the acquisition of territory, or the hope of plunder, but carried on for the independence of Britain, the security of our constitution, and the protection of the property of every individual. He thought that no man could for a moment hesitate the contribution of a small part of his income.

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Respecting the exportation of the specie, he admitted that it had certain consequences which for a time were disagreeable; it arose, however, from the country not rightly considering their situation. The mass of property had increased in a great proportion, and the circulating medium ought to increase in an equal ratio; but it was not in its just proportion, and withdrawing any part was a cause of temporary embarrassment. In times of difficulty he thought the hands of government ought to be strengthened, and in this instance he was first inclined to think a bill of indemnity would be proper, but he had since heard enough to convince him that it was not necessary.

Mr. Alderman *Curtis* said he had that day been at the common hall, where, upon a shew of hands, a majority appeared in favour of the resolution to censure the minister before hand. He told his constituents that he could not under such circumstances promise to abide by their instructions; but would attentively consider all that should be advanced on both sides, and act as his conscience should direct.

Mr. Alderman *Anderson*, (whose name was now loudly called for), spoke from the gallery; he said he had on that day again the misfortune to differ in opinion with his constituents at the common hall, where there were no more than about 900 assembled. After an honourable gentleman under the gallery (Mr. W. Smith) had made a flaming speech, he told them he would not have his opinion biased on any occasion. He was then happy to say, that from what he just heard, he would give his hearty support to the amendment.

Mr. *Nicholls* animadverted on the impropriety of sending money in the manner it had been done to the Imperial court. He made some judicious observations on the scarcity of the gold coin, as it appeared by a paper on the table; but he could not accede to the proposition of the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) on that side of the House. He thought it improper to be urged during the pending negotiation, as it might alienate the Emperor from the common cause, by making it appear that the British Parliament had censured the minister for giving him aid. Though he could not agree to the original proposition, he thought the constitution should be protected and declared on this point. No minister should have power to send money out of the country, without the previous consent of Parliament. This important fact should be settled, but by what means he was not prepared to say. Perhaps a bill of indemnity, founded too harshly

harshly in minister's ears. A declaratory law, or any thing more palatable, might be passed. He wished Mr. Fox would withdraw his motion, and yet he owned, it was necessary that some proceeding should take place to prevent the establishment of bad precedents.

Colonel *Wood* spoke, for a short time.

Colonel *Gascoigne* said he had come down to the House that day with a determined resolution to vote in favour of the motion for censuring ministers, which he thought would not have been brought forward except on full and sufficient grounds; but from what he had since heard from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the precedents that were quoted, he was convinced that the transaction that was made the ground of a charge against him, had been the established practice of government ever since the revolution. He then made some observations upon the common hall of London, and ridiculed the idea of the persons who assembled there attempting to instruct the City Members. There was one honourable member there (Alderman Combe) who needed not such instructions, for he would support any measure hostile to ministers. He was himself a member for a great trading town, and in the vote he should give that night, Colonel *Gascoigne* he should fully comply with the wishes of his constituents.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, "after the manner in which this subject has been debated to-night, I feel it impossible to give a silent vote. To the honourable gentleman behind me (Colonel *Gascoigne*), I readily yielded the precedence, and felt the indulgence usually given to a new speaker, and I carefully abstained from giving any interruption which might add embarrassment to the diffidence natural upon such an occasion. I must confess, however, that the speech of that honourable gentleman was not a little singular. He had reposed with the utmost confidence upon the truth of my honourable friend's assertion, that the conduct of ministers in the matter before the House was neither consistent with the principles of the constitution, nor supported by precedents of Parliament. Impressed with this belief, he had come down to the House determined to commit the absurdity which he had reprobated so much in the conduct of the common hall of the city of London, for, he says, that he came down resolved upon the belief he had taken up upon his authority to vote in favour of the proposition of my honourable friend. Though, upon the statement of my honourable friend he assumed that the conduct of ministers

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was defended by no precedent, since he has heard the artful representation and the eloquent speech of the right honourable gentleman, for dextrous in point of management and eloquent in point of manner, it must be admitted to have been, the honourable gentleman has discovered that the sending of money to the Emperor without the consent of Parliament is a practice not only justified by example, but interwoven with the very spirit of the constitution! It is indeed extraordinary that a member of Parliament, whose duty it is to have some knowledge of the principles of the constitution and the privileges of Parliament, should confess that he only knew the practice to be constitutional upon the assertion that it is unprecedented, and that again he should so suddenly take it for granted that it is right, without waiting for any reply to what he has heard in its defence. The honourable gentleman too, in a tone which in an older speaker would be considered as harsh, censures the conduct of my honourable friend (Mr. Combe), for acting agreeable to the instructions of his constituents, and he thinks he would be ready to support any proposition that came from the same quarter. But while he thus blames my honourable friend with no small degree of asperity, and without much appearance of diffidence, he says with triumph, "I too come here and speak the sense of my constituents as well as my own opinion." When he came down, however, perfectly determined to support the proposition of my honourable friend, how is he now so well acquainted with the sentiments of his constituents? By what means did he contrive to turn so soon the sentiments of his constituents to tally with his change of opinion, and by what new constitutional telegraph has he contrived to procure such rapid information? In truth, Sir, I wish the honourable member joy of his conversion, and the minister joy of his convert.

But, to proceed to the real question, which is the subject of consideration; before any new propositions are offered, since there are already before the House motions so very different from each other as must necessarily embrace every variety of opinion. One honourable gentleman (Mr. Bragge) who moved the amendment, is determined to turn every expression of censure into a testimony of approbation. The honourable gentleman behind me (Mr. Nicholls) does not approve of the measures of ministers upon this occasion; but he does not wish to shock the ears of the right honourable gentleman, who is so little pleased to hear his faults displayed and to see his errors recorded, with any bill of indemnity

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or any implication of censure. He wishes to have a bill, enacting that a similar application of the vote of credit shall not in future be made. To this last proposal, I confess, I least of all can agree. I consider it a libel upon the constitution, a libel upon our ancestors, to say that it requires the provision of new acts of parliament to declare, that the money which the House of Commons voted for the purpose of defraying the unforeseen charges, and answering a particular species of expenditure, should not be applied to purposes for which it obviously was not intended. The great argument which has converted so many gentlemen, and has had so great weight with the worthy magistrates (who doubtless felt a just reluctance to condemn unheard; especially a minister to whom they owed so many jobs, this, their gratitude would not permit), the great argument which has produced such distinguished conversions, and such remarkable effects, is this, that the measure at first deemed so reprehensible is justified by precedent. It is however not a little extraordinary that while precedent so powerfully operates conviction, while it so totally changes the complexion of the measure, it is not to be permitted to pass as an additional corroboration of the practice, nor as an example for future imitation. With all these precedents to which they refer, and which they so readily admit, they do not venture to add the present. It is not to be drawn into precedent. In reality while they admit the cases which have been urged in justification, they say that the present instance is so superlatively wicked, so scandalous, so dangerous, so fatal in its operation, that it must not be established. It is a stretch beyond all former example, which it is not proper to repeat; it is a rare and singular instance which future parliaments are not to sanction, nor future ministers practice.

With regard to the sense of the people collected at common halls, which has been treated so superciliously, I would ask when a meeting is regularly convened for a specific purpose, and their sentiments are properly expressed, why they should not be entitled to respect? The assertions of the worthy Alderman (Curtis) that the common hall in the city of London was not regularly conducted, is an unfair reflection upon the present chief magistrate, who, had he been a member of the House, would have very emphatically answered. But if the complaint of the worthy Alderman proves any thing, it proves that in the city of London such was the general disapprobation which the conduct of mini-

sters has excited, that the result of the meeting was obvious; that he might have heard it from the first person he met in the street. I don't know, indeed, by whom the information of the probable result was given to the worthy Alderman, whether by his correspondent, Mr. Mazzinghi, or the communicative hair-dresser. As to the irregularity in the calling of the meeting, I am informed that the person alluded to, whether properly or improperly, but certainly consistently with custom, had not indeed signed the requisition himself, but gave authority for that purpose. But to return to the real point before the House: I cannot help regarding it as a curious circumstance that so many gentlemen appear to have come down pre-determined to support the opinion they had originally adopted. The honourable gentleman (Mr. Bragge) seems to have had his mind previously made up, and his proposition previously arranged. He does not seem to have been aware that a great part of the sums sent abroad were to the army of Conde, to which his motion does not at all refer. The amendment is wholly silent upon this part of the motion of my honourable friend. What is this but an implied censure upon the transaction so far as it relates to the prince of Conde? If it rescues that part which concerns the Emperor from censure, it leaves the other to stand upon the Journals with the brand which is implied from its being passed over without notice, while the other is held up to approbation. This is likewise stated by the honourable gentleman to be a justifiable use of this vote of credit, though in reality, part of the money, while, at all events, it was defrayed from a fund on which, in no view, it ought to have been changed, was partly contained in the army extraordinaries, to which the defence does not apply. The point indeed is of the utmost importance, and the decision which the House shall pronounce upon its merit, is of equal consequence to maintain the dignity of its privileges and the respect of the constitution. My honourable friend in employing that copiousness of argument and that power of eloquence which belongs to him, felt the necessity of displaying every consideration that could induce the House, in circumstances like the present, to agree to any vote of censure. He entered into a detail, which not the subject, but the dispositions of the House, demanded. Nor is it wonderful that the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) swerved so frequently from the point of the question, and endeavoured to fix the attention of the House upon matters that tended to

to mislead their judgment. With deference, however, to the example of my honourable friend, I cannot help thinking that the real question lies within a narrow compass. It is the particular pride and the unrivalled glory of the British constitution that its characters are so clear, so precise, so intelligible, that it is impossible to transgress its spirit, and to violate its principles without the crime being easily detected and the guilt easily judged. If there be any point upon which all declamation, all sophistry, all soaring flights, all heroic professions of patriotism or disinterestedness, all freaks of imagination, calculated to dazzle or to amuse, are completely lost, it is upon a question like this. The proposition which my honourable friend has moved consists of two parts, perfectly distinct. That part which we bring forward as a charge, we are bound to prove; but when we have established the principles of the constitution, and alledged the facts by which they are violated, the *onus* lies upon the honourable gentleman to shew that the statement is fallacious, or to produce the circumstances of palliation by which the transgression is to be excused. In this view, therefore, we have to prove that certain sums are destined and appropriated to particular services; we have to examine and to decide. Here I will not examine whether the power of granting supplies and controuling their application be as ancient as the government itself, and coeval with the existence of the constitution. It is sufficient that I refer to the best times in which its principles were established, and in which they were defended, by the struggles of the people for freedom. This salutary power arose from the abuses of government, from the misconduct of ministers, from tyranny, from corruption. The reign of Charles the Second is a sufficient authority for the appeal to history. At the revolution it was solemnly recognised and since that period it has been interwoven with our parliamentary usage. In this review I cannot but wonder at the stress which has been laid upon the precedents which have been quoted. It is arguing from the exception against the rule; it is erecting the deviation into the guide. But even these precedents, upon which so much has been rested, neither apply to the present case nor justify the particular measure. The first is, that in 1706, of the advance to the Duke of Savoy, to the amount of 47,000*l*. If gentlemen, however, will take the trouble to look into the Journals they will find that this sum was granted during the recess of parliament; that not only was the ally of this country placed in perilous cir-

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cumstances, but that Turin was actually in a state of besiege. A demand was made for 50,000*l.* and the letter which Mr. Secretary Harley sent in answer to the Ambassador of Savoy, will at once explain the principles of the constitution and the inapplicability of the precedent. The letter states, that it is not practicable according to the custom of the constitution while parliament is not sitting, to comply with the request; yet, in the pressing circumstances of the case, her Majesty was willing to grant a certain sum to be deducted out of the subsidy that was paid to the Duke of Savoy. Will it then be said, that in circumstances like these, when there was a certainty that the money was employed in a manner to which parliament had consented, when it was to be deducted from a subsidy that had regularly been granted, will it be said that either in the extent or in the principle, either in the circumstances or in its conduct, the measure could be justified by an appeal to the authority of this precedent. In 1792, the engagement which ministers had then contracted took place, when parliament was not sitting, though a session intervened before it was communicated to the House. But it did not pass without observation. A motion was made that it was dangerous, and the necessity of the circumstance was stated in the resolution which the House adopted. In truth the necessity of the measure is the only plea by which it can be defended. It is this on which we differ. I will even consent to stake the whole case upon that single point, and I will admit this as the ground of the justification of ministers, if it can be made out. The third precedent is equally inapplicable to the point. The assistance which ministers gave to Holland in 1787, was given when parliament was not sitting. This assistance, for which parliament expressed their approbation of ministers, however, was then given from the most suspicious fund, that of secret service money, which completely removed every enquiry and every argument which the case might have suggested, as upon Mr. Burke's Bill the oath of a Secretary of State that the money issued was for secret services, effectually secured the minister from all responsibility, and precluded all investigation. Such then are the precedents by which so much effect is produced, by which the jealousy of the privileges of the House is to be superseded, on the credit of which every atonement for our violated laws and constitution is to be given up. The honourable gentleman says, that any farther precedent during times which we consider as the worst of times, during a parliament which we have deemed so hostile to the liberties of
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the country, and under a minister we hold so dangerous to its interests, would be received with little respect. It is true that the times of the last parliament, and the administration of the honourable gentleman, I do not hold in the highest veneration. It is true that I do not think that parliament a meritorious parliament.

What however must have been the opinion of the right honourable gentleman himself of that parliament, when out of the alarmists who have seceded from our ranks, he has sent so many to shelter themselves from danger upon the higher ground, and to hide their heads in coronets from the storm which they affected to dread? Surely if the right honourable gentleman entertains so high opinion of that parliament, he would not thus so anxiously have removed so many of those who composed the part which merited the distinction with which he thought proper to honour it. The right honourable gentleman wonders that after having allowed this subject to pass over upon the first day on which it was opened, we should now so keenly make it the object of investigation. He seems to conceive us to be bound by the same rules which limit the country in the prosecution of a thief, where, unless the hue and cry be raised, the benefit of prosecution is taken away. We have been called, ironically I suppose, a vigilant opposition, and God knows there is no reason to remind us that it is small. But I am ready to put in for my share of blame for want of vigilance, when the circumstance which is now erected into a precedent took place upon the communication of the intended loan to the Emperor, by the King's message, in the year 1795. But even any negligence which might have been displayed upon that occasion is by no means of such a magnitude as our acquiescing in the present measure would suppose. The situations were very different. Then there was a certainty that the advances to the Emperor would be repaid, because they were to be deducted from the loan which was to be granted, In the present case the circumstances are very different. The concealment which has taken place effectually precludes the House from remedying any negligence that had been committed, or repairing any mischief that has been produced. This least of all can be of any authority to the honourable gentleman, and I defy any man to say that they will bear him out in the conclusion which he is desirous to establish.

The honourable gentleman says, that he has taken larger votes of credit in proportion to the general expence of the war than any former minister; but if he applies the funds
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which are destined for other objects towards expences for which he ought particularly to have provided, of what importance is it, though it were true, that there are fewer extraordinary? We only ask, that he will not delude the country, that he will not apply grants for prospective services to those which already have been incurred. If it was not to conceal entirely what it was in his contemplation to do, why was it unfit that the House should be acquainted with the intention to take the Prince of Conde's corps into our pay. He had accepted Bills before the vote of credit was granted, and had even begun to pay them. The House of Commons was deceived by a false account, which stated that 300,000*l.* had been issued to the paymaster of the forces, while in reality it had been sent to pay the French troops we had taken into our service. If, wherever the words "vote of credit" occurred, according to the real intention of that sum, the House should substitute provision for unforeseen expences, the absurdity of applying it to services already incurred would be completely detected. What appearance would it have to combine this apparent inconsistency with the absurdity of the argument of the honourable gentleman? The honourable gentleman says, that it would not have been equally effectual to have tried the experiment of a loan, and that this mode has succeeded. Here he enters into a high-sounding description of the splendid achievements of the Austrians; extols their triumphs in a tone of as high exultation as if he were recording his own exploits, and praises their masterly retreat, which I am sure was not conducted with greater dexterity than that of the honourable gentleman to-day. All this brilliant declamation is very fine, but it is nothing to the purpose. If the Austrians have achieved all this success, might not the same advantages have resulted from a more constitutional application of the assistance. I am ready to give the honourable gentleman credit for the truth which he may occasionally communicate to the House, and I believe he speaks correctly when he tells us that last year, by the measures he adopted, he gave one chance for the safety of Europe. The real matter of congratulation then was, that the French, in their victorious career, had not carried all Germany; and the triumph of the honourable gentleman concludes his panegyric with a quotation which has no great application to the relative situation of our allies at the present moment. The honourable gentleman says, could parliament have judged of the propriety of the measure? I answer, yes; and might have judged too upon the same
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same grounds upon which ministers formed their judgment. The argument, that it was dangerous to make the measure public because it might have appeared inadequate, is applicable to every vote of subsidy, to every vote of supply, to every measure of preparation, to the votes for the army and navy, and to every department of the government. If it might be attended with a slight degree of disadvantage to publish that information to the enemy, it was more than compensated by fairness, by straight-forwardness, and by manliness of conduct. Indeed the principle on which this measure was defended, appears more dangerous than even any application of it can be thought impolitic. It claims to ministers a right to judge of the extent as well as the mode of public expenditure. It is erecting the minister into an absolute dictator. It is more than mortal arrogance. It is a pretension beyond humanity to claim. It is arrogating the attributes of the deity, the power of omniscience and infallibility, the power of refusing the desires and disappointing the wishes of those over whom they rule. Joined with the other part of the conduct of ministers, it indeed forms the subject of serious alarm. If they claim the right of landing foreign troops without consent of parliament, and of paying them by this delicate process, without application to this House, where is the security left for our liberties and for our constitution?

Mr. Sheridan concluded with observing, that there was only one other point which he should notice, and that was the *argumentum ad hominem* which the honourable gentleman used against his honourable friend. But with what ill-grace did this come from him, whose whole ministerial conduct had been one continual attack upon the liberties of his country. Were it possible that his venerable and illustrious father could look down upon the three last years of his history, to see him sit to applaud his confidential friends in reviling the sacred institution of juries, and that one of the most illustrious pensioners of the crown had not even been rebuked for saying that Courts of Justice were become nothing more than schools for sedition, to see him covering the whole face of the country with Barracks and Bastiles, without even submitting it as a question to parliament, to see the whole country put under military government, and the people placed under the subjection of the bayonet, while, as if this were not sufficient, their mouths were shut up, and themselves prevented from meeting to consult on their grievances, and proceeding in his climax of constitutional

tional violence, wresting from them, one after another, all their rights, came at last to take out of the hands of the representatives the guardian disposal of their money? When he recollected the means by which that right honourable gentleman came into power, the arts by which he had retained it, the contempt with which he had treated the House of Commons, and the disregard of its declared opinion which he had shewn, how can it be thought that he will resign himself to its judgment with that submission which the conclusion of his speech bespoke? No credit can be given to that idle rhodomantade, that unmeaning cant of resignation. Of all the ministers that ever governed the affairs of this country, the right honourable gentleman was the man who had employed in his administration the worst of means, and entailed upon his country the greatest of evils. If two motives could be assigned for his conduct; if it could be said on the one hand that he could be guided by views of power and sentiments of ambition, or by feelings of patriotism and virtue, he should not hesitate to ascribe the former to a minister whose whole life had marked the same disregard for the one, as attention to the other.

Colonel *Gascoyne* said a few words in explanation, as did also Mr. *Bragge*.

Sir *William Pulteney* said, that after what had passed that-night every body would see that this was a very important subject, because it involved a great constitutional question. He had always understood it to be the exclusive privilege of the House of Commons to vote money for the publick service. He understood it to be also the privilege of the House of Commons to controul the distribution of the publick money. He knew of no authority that led to any doubt of the former of these positions, nor had he any upon the latter. It had been contended upon the discussion of this subject, however, that the power of distribution was given to the Minister to the extent of a vote of credit. The House would do well to examine what had been the practice of our ancestors upon the distribution of the pullick money. We all knew what that practice was in ancient times. If the House of Lords amended a money bill, the practice of the House of Commons in former times was to kick the bill out of their House. That practice had been set aside in modern times. We were become more polite, and the mode now was to reject a money bill if the Lords had amended it. Such was the antient, and such the modern practice of the House of Commons upon money bills, if the

the lords should offer to amend them; and should they be more complaisant than they were to the House of Lords? For his part he saw no reason why they should, but many why they should not. Some gentlemen had that night given up the opinions they formerly held upon this question, upon reasons which they seemed to regard as clearly shewing that by agreeing to this measure of the minister, the House did not give up its controul over the publick purse. He owned that was by no means clear to him. On the contrary, he thought they would give up that power if they did not mark this measure with their disapprobation. He must observe, that the minister had that night relied a good deal upon precedents. He did not seem the other night, when this matter was brought forward, to know he had any precedents that would keep his conduct in this case in countenance. Neither did he say any thing of precedents of such a kind in the discussion of the subsidies that had been before the House. Nor did he, in the opening of his defence that night, tell the House he placed much dependence on the precedents he had to quote, saying only in a general way that he would state them: accordingly he drew out many instances of cases, but they did not apply to the subject which was before the House. The minister then said a good deal upon the necessity of the measure, but nothing of that kind could do away the doctrine that the House of Commons had constitutionally the controul of the purse, nor of the duty of the minister to submit the measure to the House of Commons much sooner than he did. Gentlemen who now defended the minister maintained that a vote of credit was for a sum for which the minister was answerable to the House, and that he ought to have the controul of its distribution; that the minister was bound to give to the House an account of the whole proceeding. He wished the House to examine what sort of an account this might be; not that he found fault with this, but he wished the House to see what sort of an account there might be given in such a case. The minister might say that the whole sum granted by the vote of credit was given to a foreign Prince. How could the House have any assurance of the truth of such an assertion? How could they be sure that such a foreign Prince had received it? How, if he had received it, could they learn the manner in which such foreign Prince had applied it? The House had no power to put any questions to a foreign Prince, nor had any means of receiving any official information from him. The power of the House was very different with regard to the minister of this country. They could call on him to lay

before them an account of all the money they voted for the public service. He did not make these observations because he distrusted the present minister or suspected him of any sinister motives. Nor did he make these observations because he disapproved of the present or of the last Parliament, or that he saw any thing very dangerous in the present times. On the contrary, he had a good opinion of the last Parliament, a good one of this; a good one of the present times; but the time might come when our situation in respect to Government and Parliament might be very different from what they are at present, and it was the principle of the measure that excited his alarm. Suppose the hour should arrive when a minister of this country should wish to put an end altogether to the power of the House of Commons. Suppose the House had voted him 500,000*l.* by a vote of credit, for the service of a foreign Prince in alliance with this country, and that after all not one penny of it should be given to such Prince, but that the whole of it should be given to the members of the House, to assist the minister in his wishes to overturn the constitution of this country? He wished to know what security the people would have in that case for the constitution? Bad precedents ought to be resisted at all times, and the House ought to watch over them with jealousy, but more particularly in good times, for it was then the public were least aware of them, and consequently it was then they were most likely to be carried, because it was in such times that the publick were least disposed to examine what was passing in parliament: and precedents which were passed in good times would be made very dangerous use of in bad ones. On this account it was that he had taken so much alarm at this measure, he had attended to all that the minister had said upon the subject, and he was ready to confess he thought the minister had no reason in what had appeared in the discussion of the subject. An hon. gentleman on the other side of the House had moved an amendment to the original motion; that amendment, in his opinion, although it came from a gentleman who defended the minister, was yet a degree of censure upon his conduct in this matter; he was content with any degree of censure, rather than not have any. Some gentlemen seemed to think there was no blame to be attached to ministers upon this occasion. He thought there was a great deal, he thought therefore that there should be some mark set upon such conduct to denote the disappointment of the House.

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He thought he should say a few words on the excuse of the minister that night. The minister had said a great deal on the exigency of the times ; and it appeared that the directors of the Bank had told the minister that they disapproved of a loan to the Emperor. If that loan was right, and he thought it was, he did not see why the minister should be controuled by the directors of the Bank. This seemed to him to be a very improper procedure : it was a species of *imperium in imperio*. He had no idea that the directors of the Bank should controul the operations of Government. Why should the minister transact this business in a private manner because the directors of the Bank were against it ? The minister neither had, or ought to have, any power that was not controulable by the people in Parliament ; but Government had, and ought to have, a great deal of power that was not controulable by the Bank of England. It had been observed that specie was taken out of the country to a great amount in the course of the present war, and some gentlemen apprehended great danger upon that account. This did not appear to him in so formidable a light as it did to some, for the property did not all go in specie out of the kingdom upon the aids that had been granted to foreign states ; much of it had gone in goods, and of the money much would come back again in the course of commerce. He found no fault with the minister upon that account. But what he found fault with, and he found much, was that if he thought the measure of a loan was right, as he himself certainly did, the minister did not come forward to Parliament at once, and say so. Why did he not say boldly it was a point in which the interest of the country was deeply involved ? That the interest of all Europe was involved in it ? Why did he suffer himself to be terrified by the disapprobation of the directors of the Bank ? How was he sure that he had not caused an injury to Europe by being thus intimidated ? Why should the operations of Government be thus crippled by the directors of the Bank ? He thought it probable that the interests of Europe had been injured by this caution of the minister ; for he was not sure that if the French knew that the Emperor had three millions from this country in the course of the last campaign, they would have attempted what they did. These things the minister ought to have brought before Parliament openly and boldly, and not to have suffered himself to be controuled by the directors of the Bank. Having said this, he would now add, that with regard to the precedents which had been quoted by the minister,

nister, he was not convinced by any of them that the conduct of the minister was justifiable in his endeavour to infringe on the power of the House of Commons over the public purse. The power of that House was two-fold. It had a power over the purse, and a power over the sword. The former they possessed, as had been stated several times that night. The latter they had from the Mutiny Act. Let but one of those be taken away, and the power of that House would be instantly reduced to nothing. He concluded with repeating a wish that the conduct of the minister upon this occasion, might be marked with the distinct disapprobation of the House.

Mr. *Wilberforce* supported the conduct of the minister, and in doing so, took notice of some parts of the speech of Mr. *Sheridan*. He said he was inclined to think that that gentleman was not in the House on a former night, when the present subject was brought forward, for he seemed to have misconceived what he had said on the occasion, for which he appealed to those who surrounded him. What he said was this: That he apprehended a vote of credit gave to ministers a general discretion. That in the exercise of that general discretion, they were to select the objects and lay out the money; but that the whole of their conduct was to be subject to the subsequent revision of the House of Commons. That was the declaration he made, and by that declaration he meant to abide. Another part of the speech of the hon. gentleman demanded his notice. The hon. gentleman had become something like the defender of his morals, for which he did not thank him; he wished his morals to be left to shift for themselves, and not to have the countenance of the hon. gentleman.

He then proceeded to state the impression which the whole of this debate had made upon his mind. Here he could not help observing that the hon. gentleman to whose speech he had already alluded, had made use of every possible means to take away the impression made by the speech of his right hon. friend who had so ably and fairly defended himself that night. He had attempted to take away the force of the precedents which had been quoted that night. His right hon. friend had referred to ten or eleven precedents, and had alluded to a mass more of them, which he only forebore quoting. The hon. baronet who had just spoken, was not, he believed, in the House when the minister had said a few words upon this subject the other night. If he had, he would have found that the minister declined entering upon his

his defence then ; no wonder, therefore, that he did not then quote any precedents, for he reserved every thing he had to say upon the subject to the present night. He had now, however, proved that it was the general practice of Parliament to give to the minister power by a vote of credit, in the manner which he had stated. That power was afterwards to be revised and confirmed by parliament, and until so confirmed it was not complete. The minister in arguing these points had referred to ten or eleven precedents, which the hon. gentleman (Mr. Sheridan) had dexterously reduced to three. The minister had given instances of money being given to foreign Princes, as this had been given to the Emperor, without the previous knowledge of parliament. It remained for the minister then only to prove, that in so doing he had acted according to the necessity of the case. This he had done by explaining to them the situation of affairs upon the Continent, and at home ; and this by the testimony of those who were best qualified to form an opinion upon such subjects. These gentlemen were clearly of opinion, that this measure could not have been carried on in any other way, without infinite mischief to the interests of this country. Had the minister disclosed the matter sooner than he did, he was of opinion that he would have been guilty of doing that which he could not have honestly avowed at the time ; because he could not, as minister, honestly avow that the avowal of which, would be injurious to the country. But the hon. gentleman on the other side, had said, he did not understand how this could be more difficult to be done publicly than privately ; upon this he could only repeat what he had said already, that if done publicly it must have been done at once, which was liable to this objection : either it might be too large or too small for the purpose intended to be answered by it. In the case of being too small, it might operate as a declaration of weakness to the enemy, which might be attended with great evil. In the other event, that of being too large, it might be injurious to our pecuniary interests. Whereas, by the mode which the minister had adopted, the inconveniencies of either extreme were avoided. It was certainly on that ground that gentlemen who took particular notice of the size of the sums had chiefly approved of the measure, together with the consideration of the benefits which this country had derived from the measure. It appeared by the cases which had been quoted, that money had been issued under the same form as the present, but that it was issued on occasions much less urgent than
the

the present. Indeed when he considered the matter fully, he was rather surpris'd that gentlemen should persist in their opposition to it.

He must take notice of what was said by the honourable gentleman, to whose speech he had so frequently alluded that night, with regard to the ancestor of his right hon. friend, and as to what he would have said of his son, were that great person now among them. Perhaps, if he saw some of the measures of administration, without seeing the necessity of them, he might be dissatisfied; but, if he saw what industry had been employed to destroy the constitution by many persons out of doors, and how some of them were defended within, then that great statesman would have been satisfied that his son conducted himself as a man who loved the constitution of his country.

Mr. *W. Smith* acknowledged that he thought considerable benefits to the country had arisen from the minister's conduct in advancing money to the Emperor, but he disapproved of the manner of doing it; and thought the same good effects might have followed, had a different manner been pursued.

The question being called for,

Mr. *Fox* rose, and delivered an animated and forcible reply to all the arguments which had been advanced. He began by adverting to the allusions which had been made to himself. The right hon. gentleman had not thought it sufficient to defend himself, but he had chosen to accuse his accusers. The right hon. gentleman had said that his character was hostile to that of the last parliament, and that because he was generally in opposition to the majority of parliament, he was to be considered as disqualified from vindicating their privileges. This was the train and spirit of the observation, so that according to the honourable gentleman, every member of that House was disqualified from discussing constitutional questions who did not enjoy the smiles of the minister, and proved his love and regard for the liberties of his country by his servility and subserviency to the administration for the time being. Where, Mr. *Fox* demanded, could the House really look for the defenders of the constitution but among those who disdaining the consideration of places and pensions, titles and ribbands, devoted their lives, and such talents as providence had endowed them withal, to the services of the publick, in an honest vigilance of the measures of government, with no reward but the approbation of their conscience? The right honourable gentleman attacked his enemies without any regard to his friends; for if it were
true

true that to have been long in opposition disqualified a person from asserting the character of parliament, and vindicating the constitution, what must be the situation into which he put his new friends? What would become of the Duke of Portland and Mr. Burke? For himself, he took the imputation of hostility to government, and to the parliaments that had supported government, as a compliment. He gloried in having been hostile to the parliament that spent above 100,000,000*l.* of money in subjugating America, and in being hostile to the last parliament who supported the ministers in undertaking a war unnecessary, and unprovoked. He certainly thought himself upon comparison better entitled than the right hon. gentleman to defend the constitution; he, who at the end of the fourth campaign of a most wasteful war, could only boast at the expence of more than 100,000,000*l.* that "we had achieved a chance for saving the constitution." With him the standard of merit was political servility, and he who voted with independence was pronounced to be hostile to the constitution. If the question were, whether parliament was to be defended against some pretended faction out of doors, the right hon. gentleman might give himself the air of a superior title to be its advocate, because as Minister of the crown he had chosen to bid defiance to every thing in the popular form of our system; but when the question at issue was between the Crown and the Parliament, it surely could be no moot point which of the two had the superior claim to be the advocate of the privileges of that House. It was not now a complaint of a Mr. Paine—Not an alarm about the many innocent persons whom he had brought to trial, and who, thank God, had been protected by the laws of the country; but a more formidable enemy to the privileges of parliament now presented itself, the executive branch armed with all the powers which it had lately obtained. What passage of his life, Mr. Fox demanded, could they select as a proof that he was not the man to support the constitution, against such an enemy, rather than the right hon. gentleman, whose whole life, almost, had been devoted to the encroachments of the Crown? Let him ask even his new friends, even the hon. gentleman then at his side (Mr. Windham), whether, if they wanted an associate, not an associate to carry on a war for the purpose of crushing liberty in France, not an associate to carry on a war along with our associates, the despots of Europe, for the purpose of reducing all nations to slavery, since for such an associate they would naturally look to the right hon. gentleman, but
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if they wanted an associate to defend the constitution of England against all attacks, whether they would not even yet come over rather to his side of the House than look to the right hon. gentleman? Whether they would not look to him who had never once abandoned the cause of the people and of parliament, rather than to the hon. gentleman who had in no one instance supported them? He had been forced to say so much in answer to the usual declamatory attack which he had made upon him personally, which was his favourite topic, and in the present session his constant resource. In his opening on the subject he had avoided every foreign observation, and he should now come back to the question before the House. He had said on the first day that this unconstitutional measure was made known, that it was a measure so fraught with danger, that if it were admitted, it went in fact to the doctrine that during war the constitution ought to be suspended, and that the minister of the crown should be appointed dictator. Yet, now it was asserted, that he had spoken of it at first as merely an objectionable measure. He had spoken of it from the first moment in the same terms. He had put the question hypothetically—he had said that, even admitting that Germany had been saved by the succour given to the Emperor, and with Germany that even Great Britain had been saved, still the measure was not justified, because the same succour might have been given by constitutional means. Parliament might have been consulted, and the whole done in a way that would have saved us from this outrage on our best security. Since the first opening of the business, it had been discovered that a great part of the money had gone to the maintenance of the Prince of Conde's army. Now surely there could have been no danger in avowing this to Parliament. It did not even appear in the distribution paper of the vote of credit, that the money had been sent for the maintenance of the Prince of Conde's army, though it was now thought adviseable to state it in that way. Here then was proof on the face of it of juggling and fraud—for finding it taken up by the House, the right hon. gentleman had chosen to put it into the vote of credit; but, said the hon. gentleman, it is a superficial view of the subject to take the account of the remittances from the dates of the issues—they ought to be taken from the periods of the engagements being formed; and therefore though the money appeared to be paid during the sitting of parliament, the engagements were entered into during the recess. He should have a very contemptible opinion

nion of the understanding of the House, and of the people of England, if they permitted themselves to be cajoled by so trifling and unfounded a distinction; and if they did not express their resentment at the insult which it conveyed upon them. For what did it amount to? That the Chancellor of the Exchequer first promises, what he has no right to promise; viz. succours to a foreign power to be advanced from time to time.—Parliament meets before those succours came to be sent. A constitutional minister, conscious of having done an extraordinary thing, which, however the pressing necessity of the case might warrant, would have taken the very first moment to communicate what he had done, to lay the whole circumstances of the case before them, and to request a bill of indemnity. But no such thing! He did not think it wise and safe to trust the secret to Parliament until he had fulfilled his engagements. Perhaps a greater outrage on the dignity of the House could not be offered than was contained in this explanation. He, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, could only safely be trusted with the disposition of the money of the people of England, but to give to their representatives even a hint of what he was doing with it, might have utterly defeated the very end of the measure. Parliament might have viewed the measure in three ways. They might have thought the conduct of the hon. gentleman in the engagements he had formed perfectly proper, and have declared their approbation of the measure; or they might have thought the measure improper and indiscreet in itself; but yet being undertaken, thought it unwise and dangerous to stop its execution; in either of these two ways there would have been no essential inconvenience in making known the matter to Parliament on the first day of the meeting. But there was a third mode of viewing the subject. They might have thought it a measure so utterly unwise and improper, so injurious and fatal, that they not only would have censured the minister for making the engagements, but prevented their execution. But this he had taken care to provide against. “No, no, said he, you may censure me. You may attack my character; but I have taken care that you shall not save your money. Thank God, your money is gone to Germany!—you cannot get it back again, whatever you do with me. My life is not implicated in the proceeding, but my honour is in your hands; and I abide the responsibility of the measure.” Mr. F. demanded, if this was language to be endured? It not an insulting de-

gradation of Parliament, to say that they were not fit to be consulted on the disposition of the money of their constituents? Was it not to say, that he was a better judge than the House of Commons; or did he think that it would have degraded his dignity in the eyes of foreign statesmen, and foreign cabinets, to own that he must consult the British Parliament before he parted with British money?

This was exactly what the constitution imposed upon a British minister. What every man who venerated that constitution wished to see enforced—that a British minister should be forced to make known to foreign statesmen and foreign despots, that however they might trample on their miserable people, and rob and plunder them at their pleasure, there was one chosen, one enviable spot upon the surface of the earth where men had asserted their rights, and would not be treated as slaves. If it was done with the pretext of secrecy, he would prove that such secrecy was as false in policy as it was odious in morality. The ignorance of the magnitude of the remittances would increase the terror of the transport of our specie, and accordingly, in August and September last, when the rumour of these remittances got abroad, the scarcity of money was the greatest, if they might judge from the discount on navy bills, and the price of the funds. Was it to be believed that the succour to the Emperor would not have been more efficacious if known to all Europe? Would it not have had influence upon France if they had known that the Austrians were to be supplied with British gold, or was he afraid that it would have damped the ardour of despotism, that the Austrians would have fought with less spirit if the money had come to them tainted with the republican odour of the British constitution? What was there in the honourable gentleman that he should confide in him such monstrous powers? And yet he would rather confide in him personally than he would in office. It was not the man so much as the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he dreaded. Good God! if a Chancellor of the Exchequer can give away to a foreign Prince 1,200,000*l.* without making it even known to Parliament, what might he not do? What security had they for any thing else? Mr. Fox then animadverted on the amendment, which, he said, was inapplicable, since it left out, one compleat branch of the charge, the money sent to the Prince of Conde's army—and it talked of not drawing it into a precedent, except in cases of necessity, which wanted no precedent at all, since obvious and imperious necessity must bring its own justification. He then

then went over the whole of the precedents, and shewed that they were all inapplicable, even the last. The only precedent likely to countenance an infraction of the constitution, drawn from his own administration under the support of the last Parliament. But it seems, that because the opposition had failed in vigilance, in this instance of money advanced in 1795, this was to justify ministers in going on in the same career. How did this apply to the conduct of ministers in the prosecutions, or rather the persecutions, that took place four years ago for libels, when by the distorted laws of that country of legal tyranny, where they had obtained verdicts, had they softened punishment or granted mercy, because similar libels had been passed over with impunity? Mr. Fox concluded with a warm argument, that no advantage had been gained by the manner in which the business had been done, and after hearing the minister say, that he would persist in the same course, he should only add, that if he continued to attend that House he would not relinquish his endeavours to obtain their marked disapprobation of the measure, and if otherways, he had no doubt but the people would find abler advocates. But if this measure was not reprobated, he should think that man a hypocrite who pretended to see any distinction between this government and an absolute monarchy. He had made use, in former days, of strong opinions, he did not, he said, retract one of them; he had no hesitation in saying that occasions might arise even in a comparatively free country, when men might be driven to the necessity of resistance.

The House then divided on Mr. Bragge's amendment—

<i>Ayes</i>	-	-	-	-	-	285
<i>Noes</i>	-	-	-	-	-	81

Majority.

204

As an amendment Mr. Fox proposed, to insert after the word *credit*, in the first proposed amendment, the words,

"It being the opinion of this House that certain of the sums stated in the papers laid before this House, to have been issued on the authority of the vote of credit, were not paid on the said authority."—This was negatived.

As a third amendment Mr. Fox proposed, to add at the end of the first proposed amendment the words—

"Although no documents have been laid before the House to prove either the necessity or the expediency of the said measure."

This was also negatived.

Resolved finally,

That the measure of advancing the several sums of money, which appear, from the accounts presented to the House in this session of Parliament, to have been issued for the service of the Emperor, though not to be drawn into precedent, but upon occasions of special necessity, was, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, a justifiable and proper exercise of the discretion vested in his Majesty's ministers by the vote of credit, and calculated to produce consequences which have proved highly advantageous to the common cause, and to the general interests of Europe.

A correct List of the Minority who voted for Mr. GREY's motion on Thursday last, the 8th, "That the second reading of the resolutions of the Committee on the preceding evening be deferred till the following day."

Thomas Anson, Esq.	Litchfield.
Sir John Aubrey, Bart.	Aldborough.
John Baker, Esq.	Canterbury.
George Barclay, Esq.	Bridport.
C. G. Beauchamp, Esq.	Richmond.
Robert Biddulph, Esq.	Herefordshire, County.
W. Wilberforce Bird, Esq.	Coventry.
Honourable Edward Bouverie,	Northampton.
T. Brogden, Esq.	Launceston.
Joseph R. Burch, Esq.	Thetford.
F. Burdett, Esq.	Boroughbridge.
Lord G. A. Henry Cavendish,	Derby.
Thomas W. Coke, Esq.	Norfolk, County.
Edward Coke, Esq.	Derby.
William Colhoun, Esq.	Bedford.
Harvey C. Combe, Esq.	London, City.
John Courtenay, Esq.	Appleby.
John Crewe, Esq.	Cheshire, County.
Sir Charles Davers, Bart.	St. Edmondsbury.
Honourable Thomas Erskine,	Portsmouth.
General Fitzpatrick,	Tavistock.
Right Honourable C. J. Fox,	Westminster.
Honourable Edward Foley,	Worcestershire, County.
Charles Grey, Esq.	Northumberland, County.
James Greene, Esq.	Arundel.
James Hare, Esq.	Knaresborough.
John Harrison, Esq.	Thetford.
William Hufley, Esq.	New Sarum.
Nathaniel Jefferys, Esq.	Coventry.
Joseph Jekyll, Esq.	Calne.
Jervoise Clerk Jervoise, Esq.	Yarmouth.

Richard Payne Knight, Esq.	Ludlow.
Thomas Kempe, Esq.	Lewes.
J. Martin Lloyd, Esq.	Steyning.
James Martin, Esq.	Tewkesbury.
Ralph Milbanks, Esq.	Durham County.
Sir William M. Milner, Bart.	York.
John Nichols, Esq.	Tregony.
Dudley North, Esq.	Banbury.
William Plumer, Esq.	Hertfordshire, County.
Joseph Richardson, Esq.	Newport.
Lord W. Russell,	Surry, County.
Hon. St. Andrew St. John.	Bedfordshire, County.
John Scudamore, Esq.	Hereford.
Richard B. Sheridan, Esq.	Stafford.
George Shum, Esq.	Honiton.
William Smith, Esq.	Sudbury.
Lord R. Spencer,	Wareham.
Charles Sturt, Esq.	Bridport.
General Tarleton,	Liverpool.
Thomas Thompson, Esq.	Evesham.
Honourable Henry Tufton,	Rocheſter.
Honourable John Sutton.	Appleby.
Sir Frederick F. Vane, Bart.	Carlisle.
Robert Vyner, jun. Esq.	Lincolnshire, County.
Samuel Whitbread, Esq.	Bedford.
Charles L. Western, Esq.	Malden.
James Woolwyn, Esq.	Hereford.

TELEGRAMS

T. Christian Curwen, Esq. Carlisle.

Michael Angelo Taylor, Esq. Aldborough.

A more accurate detail of the speech of Mr. *Curwen* in the debate of the 8th instant, than we were able to give in our 327th page.

The question we have now before us is, in my opinion, the most important that has ever been discussed within these walls. It is not that fourteen hundred thousand pounds has been given to the Emperor; large as the sum is it forms but a trifling consideration. The real question for the House to decide is, whether we will suffer the most important principle of the constitution to be violated with impunity, the indisputable right of the Commons to the guardianship of the public purse has been the source from whence we have derived most of our privileges. Sir, much as it is our duty

to provide for the security of the country against foreign enemies, tis yet more important to preserve the constitution; had the threatened invasion actually taken place, I should think the subversion of our liberty the first danger to be provided against; on the vote of this night depends the value of the stake we have to contend for, and the future importance of this branch of the legislature. When we have had formerly to contend with the supporters of ministers upon the right honourable gentleman's innovations on the constitution, we disagreed widely with them upon the necessity which was set up as a plea and excuse for their conduct; we fortunately now have a question before us on which no possible difference can arise. The constitution is so explicit, that none will controvert the sole right of the Commons to dispose of the public money, and yet the honourable gentleman has dared to do it—WANTONLY to do it. If the necessity of the times called for such a measure in the absence of Parliament, could any thing justify the delay of a moment as soon as the House was met to come for INDEMNITY? I will grant him that his aid to the Emperor might contribute much to the saving of Germany, but what does that avail him? the plea of necessity as he has chosen to act is totally inadmissible; he rejects the only ground on which the House could tolerate such a measure by the kind of defence he sets up. This is one of the consequences of the bills of last year. What are the five hundred members of this House without the support of the people? nothing. I foretold to the House when the right honourable gentleman had succeeded in taking from us the support of the people, we should soon become objects of contempt; such we truly are, if by the vote of this night we do not do justice to ourselves and the people. If we suffer this to pass, I should consider the constitution as destroyed, the dignity and importance of the Commons as gone, and every claim to respect forfeited. I look with an anxiety beyond that I can express, for the result of the measures before us; they are of more moment than any preparations to defend us against foreign enemies; on the result of this will greatly depend how far we are interested in that defence—if our liberty be gone, the rest is of little consequence. Whilst the country was FREE I had a stake worth hazarding every thing for its preservation, if that be destroyed I care not what may follow. An honourable gentleman opposite to him talked of the candour with which a delinquent should be treated by his friends, but he was of a very different opinion,

nion, and would never shut his mouth against abuses; if any friend of his was guilty of a flagrant delinquency, he should blame him more severely than a person of whom he entertained neither opinion nor respect. Happy would it be for the country and much for the security of his Majesty's government, if the right honourable gentleman, instead of exalting the prerogative of the crown upon the liberties of the people, was to advise his Majesty to share the burdens of the war with his subjects. It was the pride of the country in its season of prosperity, to provide with a liberal hand for the splendour and dignity of the crown; the pomp and splendour befitting such a period was an insult to the feelings of the nation under the sad reverse it now experienced; more pride, more security would result to the crown by the sacrifice of a part of those useless appendages; it is what the country has a right to expect. The time may come when the public spirit of a monarch shall avail him no more than all the glitter and parade of tinsel and pomp. When people are rapidly descending to a condition they were not born to, in consequence of the heavy imposts they are forced to pay for the protection of the state, it would not disgrace the Sovereign to allot a portion of his wealth for their relief. I trust the House will by the vote of this night, teach the right honourable gentleman the season is not yet arrived, when with impunity he may trample upon the Commons of Great Britain.

List of the Minority on Wednesday Dec. 14th. 1796.

Thomas Anson, Esq.	Litchfield.
Sir John Aubrey, Bart.	Aldborough.
John Baker, Esq.	Canterbury.
Sir Charles W. Bamfylde, Bart.	Exeter.
George Barclay, Esq.	Bridport.
Sir Francis Baring, Bart.	Calne.
C. G. Beauclerk, Esq.	Richmond.
Robert Biddulph, Esq.	Herefordshire County.
W. Wilberforce Bird, Esq.	Coventry.
Honourable Edward Bouverie,	Northampton.
Honourable W. H. Bouverie,	New Sarum.
James Brogden, Esq.	Launceston.
Joseph Randyll Burch, Esq.	Thetford.
F. Burdett, Esq.	Boroughbridge.
George Byng, Esq.	Middlesex, County.
Lord G. A. H. Cavendish,	Derby.

Sir,

Sir Robert Clayton, Bart.	Ivelchester.
Edward Coke, Esq.	Derby.
Thomas William Coke, Esq.	Norfolk, County.
William Colhoun, Esq.	Bedford.
John Courtenay, Esq.	Appleby.
Sir Charles Davers, Bart.	St. Edmondsbury,
Charles Dundas, Esq.	Berkshire, County,
Honourable Lawrence Dundas,	Richmond.
Honourable Thomas Erskine,	Portsmouth.
General Fitzpatrick,	Tavistock.
Sir Henry Fletcher, Bart.	Cumberland, County.
Honourable Edward Foley,	Worcestershire Country.
Right Honourable C. J. Fox,	Westminster.
Charles Grey, Esq.	Northumberland, County.
James Green, Esq.	Arundel.
James Hare, Esq.	Knaresborough.
John Harrison, Esq.	Thetford.
William Hussey, Esq.	New Sarum.
Nathaniel Jefferys, Esq.	Coventry.
Joseph Jekyll, Esq.	Calne.
Jervoise Clerk Jervoise, Esq.	Yarmouth.
Thomas Kempe, Esq.	Lewes.
Sir J. Dashwood King, Bart.	Chipping, Wycombe.
Richard Payne Knight, Esq.	Ludlow.
French Lawrence, Esq.	Peterborough.
John Lemon, Esq.	Truro.
Sir William Lemon, Bart.	Cornwall, County.
T. Martin Lloyd, Esq.	Steyning.
James Martin, Esq.	Tewkesbury.
Ralph Milbanke, Esq.	Durham, County.
Sir H. St. John Mildmay, Bart.	Westbury.
Sir W. Mordaunt Milner, Bart.	York.
John Nicholls, Esq.	Tregony
Dudley North, Esq.	Banbury.
William Northey, Esq.	Newport.
Henry Peters, Esq.	Oxford, County
William Plumer, Esq.	Hertfordshire, County.
George Porter, Esq.	Stockbridge.
Henry Pierse, Esq.	Northallerton.
Sir James Pultenay, Bart.	Weymouth.
Sir William Pultenay, Bart	Shrewsbury.
Honourable John Rawdon	Launceston.
Honourable George Rawdon,	Lncoln.
Joseph Richardson, Esq.	Newport.
Lord John Russell,	Tavistock.

Lord Willam Ruffell,	Surry, County.
Honourable St. Andrew St. John	Bedfordshire, County.
Samuel Elias Sawbridge, Esq.	Canterbury.
John Scudamore, Esq.	Hereford.
Richard Brinsly Sheridan, Esq.	Stafford.
George Shum, Esq.	Honiton.
Sitwell Sitwell, Esq.	West Looe.
Lord Robert Spencer,	Wareham.
Lord Stanly,	Preston.
Charles Sturt, Esq.	Bridport.
General Tarleton,	Liverpool.
Michal Angelo Taylor, Esq.	Aldborough.
Lord John Townshend,	Knaresborough.
Honourable Henry Tufton,	Rocheſter.
Honourable John Tufton,	Appleby.
Frederick Fletcher Vane, Bart.	Carlisle.
Robert Vyner, jun. Esq.	Lincolnſhire.
James Walwyn, Esq.	Hereford.
Charles Callis Western, Esq.	Malden.
Samuel Whitbread, Esq.	Bedford.

TELLERS.

Alderman Combe,	London, City.
William Smith, Esq.	Sudbury.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, *December 15.*

The House, in a committee, went through the loan Bill and the Scotch distillery Bill, and ordered them to be reported.

The Excise Duty Bill was reported, and ordered to be ingrossed.

On several motions being made to give leave of absence to members.

Sir *William Young* observed, that the object intended by a call of the House would be defeated if so many gentlemen were suffered to be absent. On a motion, therefore, made, that Mr. Allen have leave to go into the country for six months; he proposed an amendment, by adding "after Saturday next." Upon this a division took place, when the

amendment was carried by 34 against 13. Other divisions took place on similar motions, during the exclusion of strangers; when a general motion was made to prevent any member having leave to go into the country until after Saturday next; which was carried by 38 against 11.

The Committee on the Quakers Relief Bill, was postponed till Monday next.

Mr. *Rose* obtained leave to bring in a Bill to explain and amend the act for diminishing the drawback on the exportation of sugar.

Mr. *Hobart* brought up the militia estimates. Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, Dec. 16.

SOUTHWARK ELECTION.

The members to form a committee appointed to try the merits of the Southwark Election petition were chosen and sworn.

Mr. *Taylor* requested the attention of the House to a subject, which he said, he was aware required an apology as coming from him, for it related to himself. He understood it to be a rule of the House to hear the complaint of any member when he had any to make against those who had maliciously misrepresented him in what he had said in the House. Such wilful misrepresentation he understood to be against the orders of the House. He had been thus maliciously misrepresented, he said, in a daily paper, called the Sun. Those who conducted that paper might, perhaps, be a little partial to the present administration, and the existing government of the country; if so, he had nothing to allege against it, nor did he charge any person who had a share in his Majesty's government with any thing upon that account. He should be ashamed of imputing to any one of them a desire to forward, or a wish to connive at any ill-founded representation of the kind to take place against any individual, still less, if possible, against any member of that House. It had been of late an indulgence of the House to permit strangers to be present, and to give accounts of its proceedings. No person wished less than he did himself to refuse a continuance of that indulgence. He wished all the discussions of the House to be open, because he was well convinced of the public utility of it. He was aware also that some misrepresentations must unavoidably take

take place in the course of daily publication ; and when that happened to be the case, without any malicious intent, he should be one of the first to attribute it to the incorrectness with which a speech was taken down. It was his misfortune (for so he might call it) to address the Speaker on Tuesday night. On the following evening he was grossly misrepresented in the paper called *The Sun*. He could appeal to every gentleman who heard him, whether one syllable of what he said was correctly reported in the account that was given of his speech in that paper, and whether any thing that was said of him upon that occasion, in that print, had any foundation in truth. He would put it to the recollection of any gentleman who would take the trouble to read the paper, whether the whole of the speech which was reported as his, was not inserted with a foul view of calumniating him, and of spreading through the country a report that he had uttered such sentiments (he had almost said such nonsense) as would disgrace him. Since that time there had appeared, in the same print, comments upon his speech, all having the same tendency as the report. He was as little desirous, he believed, to obstruct the channel whereby the proceedings of parliament were communicated to the public, as any man in the Commons House, or in the country. What he complained of was, a wilful and malicious misrepresentation of what he said. In that view of the matter he knew he had a right to the protection of the House. He had no wish that the gallery should be shut, or that strangers should be excluded ; on the contrary, he was desirous that all possible indulgence should be shewn towards strangers, because he was aware the public were benefitted by their admission ; but he trusted such an indulgence should not be allowed to be used to calumniate the members of the House. He was entitled to call on the Attorney General to prosecute the author of this gross and malicious libel, or that the publisher of it should appear at the Bar of the House to answer for such a publication. Those who knew him would, he believed, allow there was no malice in his composition. He desired only the common right of a member of the House to address the Speaker when he thought an occasion called for it, without being wilfully and maliciously misrepresented. He had been so misrepresented in the paper to which he had alluded. He had the paper in his pocket, but he should be ashamed to read it. If any gentleman would read it, he would, he believed, agree with him, that it contained the most illiberal reflections, the most

gross and vulgar malice, that ever was published against any individual. He had no malice against the author, nor did he know any reason why the author, whoever he was, should have any malice against him. He forgave him freely, for he had no spleen against him.

GENERAL LA FAYETTE

General *Fitzpatrick* rose to make the motion of which he had given notice, respecting the imprisonment of General La Fayette and his companions. He addressed the House nearly as follows:

The French revolution has produced so many important consequences, and has so greatly agitated the feelings of mankind, that there is no circumstance immediately, or however remotely connected with it, that does not, in some degree, affect the policy of all the rest of the powers of Europe; and therefore, according to my conception of things, the motion which I mean to lay this day before the House cannot be considered as foreign to the jurisdiction or cognizance of the British parliament. It is now three years since, in a former House, I moved to address his Majesty for the purpose of procuring an interference of his Majesty to alleviate the hardships then suffered by members of the French constituent assembly, whom the chance of war had thrown into the power of those who were confederated against them; I mean general La Fayette and his companions, who were at that time in the prison of one of our allies, the King of Prussia, but who now experience a fate still more severe in the dungeon of another of our allies, the Emperor of Germany. I urged that motion on the joint pleas of humanity and policy. Perhaps some may now say, that the plea of policy is weakened, in which case I must rejoin, if it was a strong one then, what has happened in the time that has elapsed, has made it stronger now; and that the sufferings of those persons, and of others, must increase our desires to relieve them. I could not then, nor can I now, admit policy to be out of the question; for I must say, that in questions of the highest political nature, it is the worst, the most fatal policy in those who have favourable wishes to monarchy, to exhibit an instance of flagrant injustice, which has a natural tendency to warp the minds and alienate the affections of those who live under government. I recollect in the last Parliament that an honourable friend of mine, in drawing a picture of the supposed situation of this country, made use of an observation which struck me forcibly, as I believe it struck all who heard it. He said, "that although
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he lamented what seemed to him to distinguish this country, a total deficiency of publick virtue, yet private virtue, he was glad to see, was at no period more conspicuous? I own the ground on which he formed the latter part of his opinion did not suggest itself to my mind, and I could not help observing, that fate of my motion seemed to form a striking figure with regard to its justice; there prevailed, however, every where, I believe, a sympathy in the sufferings of those for whom I brought that motion forward, but no sooner had the minister opposed it, than all that sympathy, all that benevolence, which was so conspicuous, was hushed into total silence.

Let me now advert to the grounds of the opposition which was made to my motion. The House did not advert to the injustice of the case. There was but one member in it (Mr. Burke) who opposed me upon that point. The dazzling eloquence of that able man had an effect which I fear seduced the House. The minister, however, was too wise to adopt his plan. He expressed in common with the House, great horror upon the subject, and opposed me on the general ground of policy. That eloquent person to whom I have alluded, entered into a defence of the ground on which General La Fayette was originally arrested, and expatiated on the impropriety of our interfering in the affairs of, what he called, a foreign independent power. I shall not revive all that was said upon the subject. I retain the opinion which I then gave; which is, that the original arrest of General La Fayette and his companions is liable to many objections in the laws of war, as he was not taken with arms in his hand. As he could not be considered as a prisoner of war, in that light, his imprisonment is unwarranted by strict justice. When I had occasion to submit that motion, I went at length into the conduct of the parties. The House will not be displeased to hear that I shall not have occasion to trouble them with a repetition of that detail. I think that those who have been the most violent against the French, will not now say that the credit given to General La Fayette and his companions, for their sincerity at least, ought to be called in question. I hope I shall not hear this day any arguments of that nature urged against my motion. I hope also I shall not hear it said, that the reason why we should pass this subject by is, that we ought not to interfere in the domestic affairs of an independent power. Should it be urged in argument, that General la Fayette and his companions are the prisoners of the Emperor, and that therefore we have no right to inter-

fere,

fere, I am prepared to shew that General La Fayette and his companions are not the prisoners of the Emperor; and this I shall do upon the best of all possible authorities---upon the authority of the Emperor himself. I shall here request the particular attention of the House to a part of the question, which I am persuaded is sufficiently interesting to its humanity to call for it. I am speaking to Englishmen, and I have little to fear that what I am now stating will command their attention. The unfortunate object of my motion, to compensate, perhaps to enable him to bear his cruel lot, is the husband of a woman whose name will be dear to mankind while virtue commands respect in this world. A woman, who, in these days has revived the name of Arria, who divested herself of the weakness of her sex to bear all the oppression which a Claudius or a Nero could inflict, and that to participate in the distress of a husband. I have heard it said that the age of chivalry is gone---that all respect for the tender sex is vanished. Never shall I suffer one word to escape my lips that tends to impeach the character of that great man who uttered that sentence; nor to convey one expression disrespectful to the memory of that unfortunate Princess whose sufferings occasioned that observation; but that mind must be strangely dazzled by the splendour of royal rank, and with the cruelty of the fate of the late Queen of France, who can behold without pity the lot of the noble virtuous Madame la Fayette. She escaped from the fangs of the tyrant Robespierre, being, as well as her husband, the object of his fury (for it was the fate of General La Fayette to be always detested by tyrants); that amiable woman having seen her nearest, and her dearest relations, her mother and her sister, dragged to the scaffold; on the eve of being dragged to it herself, availed herself of the first moment she had to escape from the fury of that tyrant to fly to the succour of her husband in the prison of a regular government. She had the good fortune, not without some dexterity and contrivance, to obtain an audience of the Emperor, together with her two daughters, the eldest not yet seventeen years of age. She requested permission to see her husband, that she might endeavour to alleviate his sufferings, and to administer some comfort to him in the gloom of his imprisonment. The Emperor did not hear their prayer without emotion; he shewed the strongest marks of humanity, for he has not yet been long enough in the world to witness those things which too often tend to harden the heart. He applauded her conduct; immediately granted that

that part of her request which related to her being confined with her husband. But with respect to the other part of her request, he made use of the following expression, to which I beg the attention of the House :---“ With respect to the imprisonment of General La Fayette, it is a complicated business ; my hands are bound upon the subject.” Now I appeal to the House whether I am not warranted in saying that General La Fayette and his companions are not the prisoners of the Emperor. She lost no time, but hastened to the dungeon ; but even this favour was by some thought too great for her ; for, on her arrival at Olmutz, the governor of the fortress told her that her husband, having attempted to escape, was therefore subject to the rigour of the place, and that he must inform her of it ; and that if she entered the prison she could not be exempted from the same rigour. This menace did not dissuade her ; but true it is that the menace has been carried into execution. The Emperor had informed her she would find her husband well treated. What were her feelings when she entered the prison ? She saw her husband sinking under his hardships, pale and emaciated ; she learnt from him that the first change of raiment he had was brought to him that very day. It was of the coarsest materials. That the coarse materials were brought to him on purpose, and that he was insultingly told it was so, and that it was the fittest for a man like him to wear. In this situation Madame La Fayette requested the service of a female attendant, which was peremptorily refused. Under these circumstances she has continued in prison, sharing the cruel fate of her unfortunate husband. These are facts of which the public are in possession, and which, if doubted, I can prove. Whatever we may admire in the fortitude of the female character is here exhibited, but we cannot forget the delicacy of the female frame, and we know it is not calculated to endure the dreadful hardships of such a gloomy dungeon ; accordingly it appears that the health of this virtuous woman suffered greatly. She ventured to prefer a request for permission to repair to Vienna for the benefit of medical assistance. This is a fact of which there is no doubt. After the interval of three months she received the following answer : “ His Imperial Majesty is pleased to signify, that you shall, on no account, be permitted to repair to Vienna. With respect to quitting the prison of your husband, you are at liberty to do it, but it is on condition that you return no more.” What a refinement on cruelty was this ! What an ingenious device to add to the afflictions of
this

this afflicted lady ! Mark the diabolical condition ! Yes, you shall be at liberty to quit your place of confinement, but you shall return no more ! You have sacrificed your health for the society of your husband ! You shall now sacrifice the society of your husband to restore your health ! This is a refinement of cruelty which would put to the blush the greatest poet who ever attempted to paint cruelty in its most odious colours ! I will now read to you the reply of this amiable woman, this partner in the sufferings of the most afflicted husband.

LETTER OF MADAME DE LA FAYETTE.

“ The commandant of Olmütz informed me yesterday, that, in answer to my request of being allowed to go for eight days to Vienna for the purpose of consulting the faculty, his Imperial Majesty signified that, on no consideration whatever, I am to be permitted to visit that capital ; and that he will consent to my quitting this prison only on condition of never entering it more. I have the honour to reiterate the answer which I made to the Commandant.—To solicit the assistance which the state of my health requires is a duty which I owed my family and my friends ; but they are sensible that it is not possible for me to purchase it at the price at which it is offered. I cannot forget that while we were both on the point of perishing ; me, by the tyranny of Robespierre ; M. de la Fayette, by the moral and physical suffering of his captivity ; that I was not allowed to obtain any account of him, or to inform him that his children and myself were yet in existence ; and nothing shall tempt me to expose myself a second time to the horrors of such a separation. Whatever then may be the state of my health or the inconveniencies which may result to myself and my daughters from this habitation, we will all three avail ourselves with gratitude of the goodness of his Imperial Majesty, who permits us to share this captivity in all its details.”

Sir, this letter unfolds to us another instance of barbarity. During the space of two and twenty months, Mad. la Fayette was separated from her husband, in the course of which he was not permitted to know any thing of the existence of his wife ; but they are now together in the same gloomy dungeon, which has already so affected the health of this amiable and unfortunate lady, that, from the last accounts from the place of her confinement, there is too much reason to apprehend that the prison in which she is now confined will become her tomb. With respect to the young ladies, her daughters, the eldest of whom is not yet seventeen years of age, they are not allowed to be confined in the same prison with their parents. They are kept in separate dungeons, that being the rule of the prison wherein they are confined.—They are kept in this inclement season, for sixteen hours in solitary confinement. The horrors which have followed the French
revolution

revolution are so numerous and complicated that it will be the work of future ages to contemplate them, in which the sufferings of these innocent females will make a striking figure. To those who believe that religion is the best guide of human actions, the best foundation for moral virtue, it will be matter of wonder, when they reflect on the hardships of these virtuous sufferers. It will be matter of admiration for them to read of the virtuous resignation of madame de la Fayette, who became the partner of the afflictions of her husband in a dismal dungeon, and who preferred her connubial affection to her liberty and life. But what will the friends of religion say, when they learn that all this misery was occasioned by those who have from day to day hypocritically contended that they are armed, and that they fight in the cause of religion and morality, but who in truth make use of these words to exercise the most wanton cruelty on virtue and helpless innocence to gratify a cold malice! We all know that in the Roman Catholic faith, it is a ceremonial of piety, and devotion to attend mass, for the object, as the professors of that faith believe, to obtain pardon for sins by manifestation of sincere repentance. These ladies are of this persuasion. They are not now permitted the exercise of this devotion, which, as Christians, they believe to be essential to their salvation! This has been refused to their earnest solicitation. But of this I will say no more; I know the House will be glad to be relieved from the further contemplation of so afflicting a scene! Of the truth however of all these facts there is no doubt, although they have been denied. I know too it has been said, that those who bring forward these matters do an injury to those whom they wish to serve. Those who have read what has been published in the course of this war cannot be unacquainted with the publication of *Malet Du Pan*. He has given to the public a positive contradiction of many of the facts which I have stated, and upon the truth of which I pledge myself. His publication upon this subject I have in my hand; but as it is in French, perhaps the House will excuse me from reading the original to them. The substance of it is, that he wishes for the sake of these sufferers this subject had not been agitated at all. He wishes the names of these persons to remain in total silence till history shall have removed the veil. It is rather an extraordinary way, I think, for a man, who professes friendship for the afflicted, to shew his friendship, by wishing that the names of the afflicted should never be mentioned until

history has removed the veil! He says that the Emperor has acted throughout this affair in a manner that is irreproachable, and adds, that to the exertions of those who have interested themselves so much in behalf of these unfortunate persons is owing the whole of their present sufferings. I do not believe that any such considerations weigh in that manner with his Imperial Majesty. I do not charge the Emperor with being personally the author of the sufferings of these unhappy persons. Nor do I believe that if he were, the praises of Malet Du Pan would induce the world to bestow upon the Emperor the title of Titus instead of Nero.

Whatever may be the opinion of this House of the political principles of general la Fayette, I know that he is a man who would not purchase his liberty even from his present confinement, by retracting his opinions. He gave to the world a proof of it when his liberty was offered to him on condition of his betraying the French, in whose cause he was then engaged. I do not believe that this House will disapprove of him for refusing to betray those who confided in his integrity. I do not believe either, that this House, or this nation, have any resentment against him for having been the author of the plan for assembling a national guard, whose exertions have tended so much to establish the Republic of France. Still less should I be inclined to believe that this House or this country disapprove of him, because he was the companion and the friend of the illustrious Washington in America. I have too high an opinion of the liberality of the people of this country to suppose they would harbour a sentiment so mean. It then becomes this House to shew, that, as the representatives of a great and powerful people, living under a free constitution, they entertain sentiments that are much more magnanimous, and that they have hearts to feel for suffering virtue and oppressed innocence.

I owe an apology to the House for having detained it so long, on branches that are collateral to the question which I intended to submit. I rest the foundation of the motion which I shall propose to the House upon the fact, that general la Fayette is not the prisoner of the Emperor; for which I have the Emperor's own authority, by which he states that general la Fayette is not his prisoner, for he says expressly, that "his hands are tied in this business." I hold in my hand, a letter in the handwriting of Madam la Fayette herself, the lady of whom I have been speaking, verifying the fact of this being the answer of his Imperial Majesty. I think it impossible to give
a better

a better explanation of the matter; if the Emperor's hands are tied in the business, by whom are they tied? By whom can they be tied but by his allies? To whom am I applying? To a House of Parliament competent to address a Monarch now in alliance with his Imperial Majesty. The King of Prussia was an ally of the Emperor in this war; publick rumour ascribed to him the cause of general la Fayette's imprisonment. That prince, however, did not chuse to continue in the odious character of jailor to general la Fayette and his companions, and therefore he transferred them to Vienna; It has been said indeed, that in truth they have not exchanged for the better; on which I need say nothing. I now therefore call on this House for a vindication of the British name by calling for an interference to put an end to this odious cruelty. If neither the measure I propose, nor any other of a similar tendency shall be adopted, (and if any such is in contemplation, I shall be happy to withdraw mine) the odium of this cruelty must rest with this House.

The right honourable gentleman told us lately, there was not an Englishman from the highest to the lowest, who was not entitled to participate in the glory arising from the achievements of the Austrian arms, under the auspices of the Archduke Charles. If it be, how will they like to have it added, that they must also participate in the shame which arises out of the injustice and tyranny of keeping these unfortunate persons, unnecessarily, wantonly, and cruelly in the most dismal imprisonment? for so it must be if this House refuses to interfere in the present instance. Upon these grounds I shall propose an address similar to that which I had the honour of moving on a former occasion to another House of Commons. I am speaking in a moment which I consider as favourable to a measure of this nature. We have set on foot a negociation, for the success of which we have the anxious wishes and the fervent prayers of suffering humanity. Am I permitted to hope that the horrors and calamities which have too long been felt, and have filled the minds and hearts of men, are about to subside. That they are to be succeeded by mild and benevolent dispositions? Sure I am, that those who have entered into this negociation cannot give to the world at large a better pledge of their having divested their minds of that virulence and rancour which such a dreadful conflict too naturally creates, than by agreeing to the measure which I shall propose. Shall I be permitted to say, that on the part of our allies a compliance with our desire in this case will be no bad indication of their sincere

wishes for the restoration of Peace? Those who see the question in the light that I do, will agree with me in the following motion:

“ That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, to represent to his Majesty, that it appears to this House that the detention of general la Fayette, Bureau de Pusy, and Latour Maubourg, in the prison of his Majesty's ally, the Emperor of Germany, is highly injurious to his Imperial Majesty, and to the common cause of the Allies; and humbly to implore his Majesty to intercede in such manner as to his wisdom shall seem most proper for the delivrance of these unfortunate persons.”

Mr. *Sheridan* said, Sir, I rise with the utmost readiness and satisfaction to second the motion, which has just been made. But I will not for a moment prevent you from stating the question to the House, nor will I risque the chance of weakening the impression made upon the understanding and feelings of the House by adding any thing to what has been so forcibly and eloquently advanced by my honourable friend, till I hear what can possibly be urged in opposition to that irresistible appeal, which he has made to the justice and humanity of a British legislature.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* and Mr. *Windam* rose nearly at the same time; and the House loudly called on Mr. *Windam*, but the *Chancellor of the Exchequer* having obtained the preference, began,

Sir, in preventing the honourable gentleman from delivering his sentiments, I am sensible that the task which I have taken out of his hands, is one that neither that gentleman or myself can possibly touch upon with any degree of satisfaction, because, feeling what I am persuaded I feel with every member of the house, I readily admit that a more striking and pathetic appeal was never made to the feelings of the House, than in the eloquent and affecting speech which introduced the motion of the honourable gentleman. Irresistible, however, as that appeal was, addressed to the sensibility of every individual present, I am aware that this is a question to be decided by the understanding alone, and therefore cannot decline stating to the House my reasons for negativing the motion. It is more peculiarly incumbent upon me to undertake the task, as the honourable gentleman, in that part of his speech which was the most argumentative, referred particularly to what I had said on a former occasion. The argument indeed lies in a very narrow compass. I hope I need not declare that if I were satisfied of the existence of the facts, even to the tenth part of what

has been stated by the honourable gentleman, and if it depended upon me to decide whether those facts should continue to exist, I should not for a moment hesitate what course to pursue. I am persuaded that if the circumstances were such as have been described, and the case of a nature which came within the cognizance of the House, there could not possibly exist the smallest difference of opinion on the subject. But I contend that however the House may be affected by the representation of facts, which has reached the honourable gentleman, and which I have no doubt he has reason to believe to be true, though I have heard a very opposite statement of the transaction, that the case is one which does properly call for our interference. The House are in possession of no facts which authorise them to take any decided step on the occasion; there is nothing to satisfy them that the detention of La Fayette is a circumstance at all to be influenced by their authority, or connected with any exertion of their power. However their humanity be interested in the recital, considered as a question of political relations, it is one, which does not at all come within their cognizance. But how does the matter stand? The honourable gentleman has quoted a verbal report of a speech of his Imperial Majesty, who is represented as having said, "That the matter did not depend upon him; that it was a very complicated affair; that his hands were bound up." He therefore supposes from this declaration of the Emperor, that the detention of La Fayette is an event which depends on the will of his Britanic Majesty, as an ally of that prince. But upon what ground is such a supposition formed? From whatever motive of duty or obligation the Emperor may have acted in adopting this measure of the detention of La Fayette, by what inference can it be concluded that the King of Great Britain is either implicated in the motive, or a party to the engagement? As to the question of any such engagement, I now declare in the most publick, solemn and explicit manner, that I know of no obligation expressed, implied or understood by his Majesty, as at all connected with the transaction. I know of no communication that has passed on the subject between the courts of London and Vienna. No opinion has been asked from this country, nor has any reason been offered to believe that it was a question on which we could have any influence to decide. It is a transaction in which his Majesty has not had the smallest participation, and with respect to which, he can have no right to interfere. As to the colours in which the honourable

able gentleman has represented that transaction, there can be but one feeling; and to whatever degree the representation may be just, if it was a case in which the House could with propriety interfere, there could be but one sentiment as to the course which ought to be adopted on the present occasion. For my own part, whatever be the ground of his original detention, which I now do not mean to discuss, however justifiable the right which may have been exercised in the first instance, I have no hesitation in saying with respect to him, as with respect to any other individual, that if the severity of his imprisonment is carried to any thing beyond what is necessary for the purpose of safe custody, if it is accompanied with any circumstances of insult, cruelty and outrage, such a conduct cannot fail to meet the strongest reprehension, and to excite the warmest indignation in every manly and feeling mind.

We have no means of judging of the facts; very opposite statements have undoubtedly been submitted to the publick. But even after the sympathy which has been produced by the narration of the honourable mover, I will venture coolly to submit to the judgment of the House, whether we are bound to take upon ourselves the responsibility of any act of cruelty, injustice or oppression, which may be committed by a power with whom we are upon a footing of amity and alliance? If we admit the principle in one instance, we must equally adopt it in all. We must take up the resolution not to continue in habits of intercourse and friendly communication with any foreign state, while we leave unredressed any act of severity, cruelty, barbarity and oppression which we may suppose to be sanctioned by the government. The honourable gentleman adverted to the sufferings of the partners of La Fayette's captivity, under the tyranny of Robespierre. I need not remind the House how greatly the cruelties exercised towards thousands by that bloody tyrant exceeded those which are represented in this instance as exercised towards one individual; nor were the victims of his oppression of a character less deserving than the object who is now held out to your compassion, many of them indeed were persons of the most exalted virtue. But was it ever stated by gentlemen on the other side that the cruelty of Robespierre was a reason which ought to prevent us from forming any connection with his government, and entering into habits of friendly intercourse with the French nation. Did not they hold a directly opposite line of argument? And in replying to their suggestions in favour of
immediate

immediate negotiation, did we ever urge our horror of the person of the tyrant, or detestation of his crimes, was the reason why he could not adopt their recommendation? On the contrary, we were most careful to state that the same principle which gave birth to his crimes, also operated in a way that precluded us from any hope of being able to treat with effect. We said, "Shew us the security that we may expect from the result of negotiation, and we shall then be ready to treat: we shall waive all objections to the character and conduct of the government, if you shall convince us that these are not connected with circumstances, which operate as a bar to peace." If we saw nothing in the character of that government to prevent negotiation, provided a proper security could have been obtained, can we possibly admit the principle, that in proportion to our connection with a foreign power, we take upon ourselves a responsibility for the separate concerns of the government, and the particular transactions sanctioned by their authority? Whatever judgment we may entertain with respect to the transaction in question, whether the ministers of his Imperial Majesty have advised him well or ill; whether they have acted conformably to the law of nations and the rights of war in the detention of M. la Fayette, we are not called to pronounce upon any decision which they have adopted. We have no more right to interfere in this instance than with respect to any other exercise of municipal authority. Are we to make a condition of our connection with any foreign country, that its criminal law shall be equitably and leniently administered; or if justice be perverted from its course, and punishment rigorously enforced, to conceive that the guilt is ours, if we do not interfere with the means of redress? Let us put a stronger case than the present instance. Let us suppose that any body of subjects in Hungary should complain that the rights of the nation were invaded, and the people reduced to a state of the most abject and cruel oppression, should we in consequence of such a representation be entitled to interfere in order to vindicate their privileges and rescue them from the tyranny of the sovereign? But let us bring the case home to ourselves, and ask how this country would feel if any interference were attempted by a foreign power with respect to the proceedings of its government? I hope that this country never will nor can produce any parallel instance to the transaction in question. But let us for a moment suppose that we were parties to any transaction of such a nature as to excite feelings of compassion, regret, and horror in
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foreign nations, and to produce from them an interference founded on such sentiments, should we conceive them justified to make their feelings the standard of our conduct—to set up their judgement in opposition to our authority, and by their interference, controul our independence? I will state a strong case: Let us suppose that some country, not a party to the slave trade, should take upon itself to interpose with respect to our conduct in this traffic. If humanity and justice are abstractly stated as sufficient grounds of interference, here is a trade carried on in opposition to the eternal principles of justice, and accompanied with instances of cruelty and outrage the most shocking to humanity. What instance of individual oppression can be put in competition with the injustice of a traffic which strikes at the root of every moral obligation. What case of private suffering can be brought forward so atrocious in its nature or dreadful in its circumstances? Yet feeling as I do on that subject, and supposing even the Emperor actuated by similar sentiments, would I, or those who think with me on the question, conceive his Imperial Majesty to be justified if he made the suppression of the slave trade a condition of his alliance with us? Would not every man in this House repel with indignation this interference with our domestic economy, this invasion of the authority of our government, this insult to our national independence? I will not dwell longer on the subject. No, instance of such interference as is now proposed has ever occurred at any former period. No case has been made out, with calls upon the House to interfere, nor could such interference be attempted without establishing a principle of the most unwarrantable tendency; a principle inconsistent with the internal policy and independent rights of foreign states. I cannot therefore comply with the invitation, which the honourable gentleman has held out, to interfere in this instance. It would be improper for this House to take any share in a transaction, which in no degree comes within their province, and on which their decision could have no influence. I desire most explicitly to state, that it shall not be understood or supposed, that it depends on any determination of this House, or on any right of this country, to prevent the Emperor from prolonging the detention of *M. la Fayette*.

Mr. Fox said, when upon the question to which the attention of the House is now directed, I feel upon the one side an appeal so forcibly made to humanity, to justice, and to policy, which it is attempted to elude by an elaborate display of

of sophistry, upon the other I cannot delay one moment to give utterance to the sentiments with which I am impressed. Notwithstanding the disapprobation I feel of the manner in which the right honourable gentleman has argued the subject, I am glad to find one good effect that has arisen from the discussion; I rejoice to find that the enormity which my honourable friend so eloquently painted, is at length admitted; that it is agreed that France in the worst times of the tyranny of Robespierre, that the history of the world cannot produce an instance of injustice, of cruelty, of oppression, more aggravated, though not in the extent, in principle and in the individual application, than the treatment which general la Fayette has experienced from the Ally of this country. But the honourable gentleman doubts the truth of the facts which have been stated. Certainly there is no legal proof, no formal evidence, to substantiate them; but without any very favourable opinion of the candour of gentlemen upon the other side; a quality which, with regard to myself, I cannot discover any extraordinary disposition to practise, I will undertake, if necessary, to furnish such evidence as cannot fail to place the matter beyond dispute, and which they themselves could not refuse to admit. But is not the circumstance a point of notoriety? Is it not true beyond the possibility of contradiction? Can any degree of doubt be thrown upon the answer which Madame La Fayette received from the Emperor, or the letter in reply to the alternative that was proposed to her application? Do we not know that a government embarked in a war in defence of religion, the principles of humanity, and the existence of social order, upon the request of this illustrious lady, did not merely refuse the favour, but, as my honourable friend so well expressed it, with a diabolical refinement of cruelty and of insult, connected the refusal with an insidious endeavour to tempt her from her character, her principles and her honourable and virtuous purpose. What are the terms which they annex to the indulgence they offer? You must not come to Vienna; you may go elsewhere; but it is upon condition of the desertion of your husband for ever! The letter which records this insulting, this inhuman proposal, is public, its authenticity is incontestible. And can we doubt that the ministers who advised the Emperor, who cannot be supposed to have been acquainted with the true character of this detestable proceeding, to commit an outrage, to disgrace himself by an act of cruelty, never surpassed by the tyranny of Robespierre, are guilty? Let us not think

to justify the conduct by any doubt of its truth. The facts are such as every man may judge, and the only result of his judgment must be that they are true.

But, says the right honourable gentleman, if we interfere upon the present occasion, strong as it is, we violate the general principle that prohibits us to interfere in the internal regulations of independent states. Has he, however, forgotten the general argument which he has so frequently urged to us upon many important questions? "Is the principle to be admitted with no limitation; can the rule suffer no exception?" The only difference we have had with him is, whether in the cases for which he contended the exception was to be endured? When the power of the crown is to be encreased at the expence of the liberties of the people, when the constitution is to be infringed, when the privileges of this House are to be disregarded, the right honourable gentleman has no objection to abandon the principle, and to be guided by the exception, and it is only when an illustrious sufferer is to be freed from the dungeons of despotism; it is only when humanity, when justice, when virtue plead their strongest claims, that a general rule cannot soften, in his estimation, the smallest portion of its rigour. If in one instance we admit the exception, here alone he perceives no limits to its application. It is said, that there are no precedents; I will, however, tell the honourable gentleman that there are many precedents in the history of Europe, some where such interferences were without effect; others, when they were employed with success. When our Ambassador left Paris at the beginning of the present contest, he left behind him a powerful intercession in favour of the unfortunate King. Is the case of the interference of France in favour of Aſgill, referred to in an elegant book which every body has read, unknown, and does this form no precedent? I wish to know what there was in the connection of France with America so intimate and so peculiar, that warranted that court to do with America what we cannot attempt with Austria? Were they more closely united by the nature of their cause, or the circumstances of their alliance, than we to that Ally with whom we employ such scrupulous delicacies? After the glorious share which we were to be proud to boast in the victories of the Archduke, can we doubt of the intimacy of the relation only where it may promote the cause of humanity and of justice? The words of the Emperor are clear and intelligible: *his hands are tied up, he is bound.* Surely this does not mean that the Emperor is bound

bound by any law. Is he so short of power, especially in the country which is the scene of this atrocity, that he does not possess the authority to liberate a prisoner unjustly detained? Then he must be bound by his Allies; he must then be bound by some one of those known powers with whom he is connected. To shew, therefore, that Great Britain is not the power to whom this injustice is to be ascribed, to preserve our honour and our character unfulled, I call upon the House to pass a vote that will rescue us from the imputation of being concerned in so detestable a transaction, and attach the infamy to the party to whom in reality it belongs.

But we are told, you will interfere in the domestic economy and regulations of independent states. I answer no: this is not a question which affects domestic economy. I see General La Fayette and his unfortunate companions transferred from the prisons of the King of Prussia to the dungeons of the Emperor; and why? but because he was considered the prisoner of the Allies. I am aware that a cavil may be employed, but surely it cannot be employed with success; viz. that, as General La Fayette was taken prisoner before we engaged in the war, he is their prisoner only who were then engaged. I hope, however, that such a pitiful cavil will not be urged. The transfer of this unfortunate man from his original place of confinement is a complete proof that he was not the prisoner of the King of Prussia, not the prisoner of the Emperor of Germany, but that he was the prisoner of the powers confederated against France. And can this be called an interference in domestic policy? Is General La Fayette the subject of the Emperor? or was he taken up for violating laws which he was bound to obey? No; he was taken as a prisoner of war; and then, of course, he ought to be held as the prisoner of the Allies jointly, according to the law of nations. Be it then, that he is to be considered as a prisoner of war (though even this is a point which may admit of dispute) it is a common custom to allow to such their liberty upon their parole, and upon condition that they shall not again serve during the war. But was any such proposal made to la Fayette? No: with that diabolical malice which prompted the ministers of the Emperor to endeavour to tempt the wife of this illustrious sufferer to depart from the magnanimous purpose she had formed of succouring her oppressed husband, they in vain attempted to seduce the gallant la Fayette to renounce that bright reputation he has so honourably acquired, to tarnish

those laurels with which he is decked, to sacrifice that proud and dignified character that will flourish in the annals of the world, and live in estimation of posterity, when kings and the crowns they wear are mouldering in the dust. Will you give a sanction to those who disapprove the constitution to take up arms to destroy it? La Fayette, while he disapproved the measures by which he was driven from his country, felt a magnanimity that did not permit him to promote the designs of those who were confederated against it; nor would he violate, by a treacherous act, that duty and that affection which he still felt for his country. I hope and trust, therefore, that the House will feel that La Fayette was detained, not as a subject of the Emperor upon a criminal charge, but that he was confined as a prisoner of war, and not as a prisoner of the Emperor, but as a prisoner of the allies.

Shall I be told by the right honourable gentleman that there is no connection between the infamy of so base an injustice as this, and the very success with which a common cause is pursued? Suppose that, at the period when this country was at peace with France, when her internal situation was such as would not have induced the right honourable gentleman to interfere, had he been united with her by treaties, and about to act with her as an ally in defence of religion, of humanity, and of social order, would he not have said to her rulers, the object of the confederacy cannot be pursued with success, unless you remove the scandal and the disgrace which your internal proceedings must occasion? Conceive too that, at the period when the restoration of monarchy in France, and such an idea was certainly acted upon to a certain degree at least, the Emperor of Germany had thrown into prison the Count of Provence, who now claims the Crown, would it have been possible to have prosecuted the war with any appearance of propriety without obtaining his liberation? Should we not have interceded in his favour to avoid the appearance of so glaring an inconsistency. Where is the difference, I would ask, between this and the present case? When a war is pretended to be undertaken to defend religion, justice, and social order, is it possible, while such unheard of cruelty exists, while it is perpetrated by one of the allies, co-operating to that object, in the person of a warm friend to limited monarchy, a martyr of that cause and to his principles, that the cause can be prosecuted with success, that the confederates can merit any confidence in their sincerity? It is not enough to vindicate the honour of this country from the partnership of so vile a transaction. We
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are told by the right honourable gentleman, that Great Britain is perfectly free from any part of the blame. We ought not to be content with so unsatisfactory a declaration upon so nice and delicate a subject. We should declare, not by a ministerial assertion, but by that intercession we ought to make with our ally, that we are wholly unconcerned, and that so far as lies in our power, we have done every thing to vindicate ourselves from the infamy, and to remedy the injustice. Is it contrary to the rights of independent states, and the custom of nations, to intercede with an ally in the cause of humanity? Many instances have occurred when this intercession has been made with success, and none is to be found where it gave offence. Has the right honourable gentleman forgot the humane interposition of the court of France with its ally, America, in favour of Mr. McGill? Does he not know that such interposition was made with effect? He certainly does know that fact. But when we reflect upon the nature of the alliance which subsists between this country and Austria, the loans which from year to year the Emperor has received, the peculiar alacrity, and the extraordinary manner with which ministers have stepped forward to supply his necessities, must not every man acknowledge that here, if in any case, there is as little room for scruple as there would be ground for offence? Here, without arrogant presumption or rash interference, we might recommend to our ally to forbear a conduct that throws a stigma upon the cause we maintain, and reflects odium upon the parties by whom the injustice is perpetrated. Till this be done in an open and unequivocal manner, I must believe that the Emperor is really bound, and that he is prevented from pursuing his inclinations by some ally, by whom he is in a situation to be controuled.

The right honourable gentleman adduced a very singular instance to justify his argument against interference upon the present occasion. I am sure he will do me the justice to think that I do not look upon the slave trade with a more favourable eye than himself. He has stated justly and strongly that few instances of the most undisguised injustice, of the most aggravated enormity and accumulated horror, which blot the history of mankind, can be compared with this abominable traffic. The right honourable gentleman, however, will agree, that for several years, the greater number of his colleagues in office, by their speeches, by their talents, and much more by their influence, have been guilty of prolonging this system of injustice and of guilt. The honourable
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gentleman has all this while sat passive under the infamy which he must conceive to accrue from the defence of a cause so detestable, without an attempt at intercession to accelerate the overthrow of such injustice, and to vindicate the purity of his administration. He may therefore, fairly say, in justification of his present conduct, and in support of his present argument: If I cannot intercede in so honourable a cause with my friends so near me, how can I be expected to intercede with the Emperor of Germany in favour of the illustrious and unfortunate la Fayette? If I had the right, as I have not, of advising the right honourable gentleman in private, I should recommend to him to employ the weight which his intercession doubtless would carry along with it; but in his publick character I have the right; and I call upon him, if he feels that warmth of humanity which some parts of his speech seemed to imply, to vindicate his sincerity by an intercession in favour of the prisoner of Olmutz, and at once to assert the cause of humanity and protect the honour of his country.

The honourable gentleman says, that to adopt such a precedent, would be to make us parties in every internal transaction of our allies to which any objection could be formed. The honourable gentleman tells us sometimes, that it is a false mode of reasoning to argue from the rule against the exception, and from the policy of the little to the policy of the great; and I certainly do not feel myself disposed to controvert the general truth of the observation, but the present is a case of mercy, that mercy which itself is only an exception to the grand principle of justice, and held no less dignified in its nature, and no less honourable in its practice. Why then does the honourable gentleman stand so high upon the principle? Why does he refuse to admit the limitation in an instance so glorious and so ennobling? Why will he refuse to deviate from the rule to form the splendid exception, at once to reflect dignity upon the principle, and to support the cause of humanity in its operation. While the honourable gentleman has thus yielded to his cold feelings, to the unsympathising severity of his judgment and his reason; while, by the frigid dictates of his understanding, he induced the House to resist a similar motion of my honourable friend upon a former occasion, the unhappy effects are to be seen in the increased miseries and aggravated oppression of the victims we deplore. The right honourable gentleman professes to have admired the exalted virtues and the heroic

heroic magnanimity of the unfortunate wife of general la Fayette, but so much has the spirit of chivalry decayed, that he willingly allows her to moulder without resource in the recesses of a dungeon. Much as he admires this lady's conduct, she is to be little benefitted by this admiration; much as her situation excited his sympathy, he will make no effort for her deliverance; till the wasting progress of her sufferings at last finally puts a period to her distress, and closes her eyes to those calamities which she sacrificed her life to share and to alleviate. If the people of this country must exult in the victories of Prince Charles, and participate in their glory, will they not feel with equal transport the triumph of relieving the unfortunate? There is one circumstance which I cannot help observing. I have often been accused by the honourable gentleman, because I have expressed myself freely in praise of those traits of gallantry which the conduct of the enemy has displayed. But the Archduke Charles, possessing those qualities which are the usual companions of bravery, feels and does justice to the merit of an enemy. The dead body of a French general (Marceau), which had fallen into his power, he restores to his companions, and pays to his funeral those last honours that are due to bravery. Had this generous Prince the disposal of la Fayette, who could doubt of the conduct he would pursue? Capable of appreciating the merit even of an enemy, the same disposition that induced him to render justice to the merit of Marceau, would lead him to esteem qualities of la Fayette. If we may judge of the court of Vienna, from the character of this Prince, the Emperor must be bound up from following his own inclination. If we are to fix the blame upon any particular quarter, we should rather suspect of prolonging the misery and oppression of la Fayette, those who have reviled all Frenchmen, who have at all been connected with the revolution, than those who have shewn themselves capable of allowing them the merit they deserve. The Emperor is young in years, and in command; we all know how easy it is in courts to conceal the truth, and to communicate to his Majesty the impression that is desired. Mad. la Fayette asks leave to come to Vienna to obtain a consolation concerning the deplorable state of her health. She gains permission to leave her prison upon conditions with which she cannot comply. Yet these ministers in their low and grovelling minds, seemed to be afraid that they had granted too much. They dreaded that she might come to Vienna and disclose the horrid scene of iniquity with which the Emperor was unacquainted.

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They then say, you may go to Hungary, to Bohemia, or any where else you please, except Vienna; there you are not to come. Was it from any apprehension that she who had spent so much of the last part of her life in the dungeons of anarchy and of despotism---she who had distinguished herself by her pious conduct, her domestic temper, her mild and gentle virtues, was there to prove dangerous by her intrigues? No; they feared that she might obtain an audience of the Emperor, and display such a picture of her husband's sufferings and her own, as would strike his mind with indignation and horror. It is true, that these events to a certain extent are publick; that even the debates of this House may be known at Vienna. But still such matters as this are carefully and often successfully concealed from the knowledge of Princes. This will hardly be thought possible to those who judge only by what they see in this country. What happened to the King of Spain, however, may prove true of the Emperor of Germany. During the whole course of the war with Spain, his Catholic Majesty was told, and had believed, that his troops were always victorious, and to his astonishment the first account he received of disaster was, when his ministers, frightened into peace, informed him of the defeat of his army, and advised him to put an end to the war on any terms. I am convinced, it is impossible to believe any thing else, that the Emperor has been cruelly, most cruelly deceived, deceived in a point by which his honour is so severely wounded, his character so deeply disgraced. How then is the fame of the Emperor to be cleared, and his reputation to be retrieved? How is he at length to be enabled to do away the injustice, the barbarous unfeeling oppression which so long has been practised by an abuse of his authority? Suppose my hon. friend should be sent to Vienna for this object, and however unwilling to connect himself with the present ministers, I am sure in so benevolent a mission as this, he would not refuse to engage; would he possess the means of explaining to the Emperor the cruelties which his ministers had inflicted? No. This could only be done by a communication between equals. Let the King of Great Britain intimate to the Emperor by direct communication the true situation of the case, and the real sentiment of the British nation, coming from an equal authority, it could not fail of success. It would serve the cause of justice and of humanity, and afford to the Emperor shelter from the imputation of the horrors which have been committed under his authority, and rescue his name from being transmitted

mitted to posterity polluted with the guilt of so detestable an outrage, loaded with the infamy of such lengthened oppression. I call upon this House to interpose its authority that this foul fact may be cleared up. I am sure I should sooner trust, on such an occasion as this, the benevolent feelings of the House, than the frigid reason which the right hon. gentleman recommends us to exercise. After the progress they have seen of the unfortunate La Fayette from the prisons of the King of Prussia to the dungeons of the Emperor, when they see that he is the prisoner of the Allies, not the subject of the House of Austria, they will judge whether any intercession in his favour would be an infringement of the rights of independent states, or an interference with their domestic and municipal policy. In a war which is said to have been undertaken in the cause of humanity and of justice, will the House look to the treatment of General La Fayette without emotions of sympathy, or turn from his sufferings without feelings of execration? If they refuse to yield to those natural and generous sentiments which his history and his misfortunes are calculated to inspire, they are callous to every feeling which can dignify and adorn the human character. If they refuse to give their support to a motion that recommends the intercession of this country, for the purpose of putting a period to misery, already too long protracted, a measure that violates none of the rights of independent states, which even is connected with the future success of the war, if its continuation should prove necessary, they will be insensible to every honourable feeling, and to every generous principle of action. Surely such an appeal as this, I cannot make to the House in vain, it must awaken every sentiment of that humanity which is so characteristic of Britons. At a period too when a willingness displays itself to forget that animosity which so long prevailed between this country and France, when those most distinguished for their asperity are desirous of cultivating a better understanding, surely we ought to divest ourselves of rancour against those by whom it is least of all deserved. To La Fayette can be imputed none of the horrors which have disgraced the scenes of revolution in France. By almost all (I know there are a few who think otherwise) he is admitted to have been well intentioned. He acted only in the first times of the revolution; he participated in none of the atrocities which succeeded. Yielding to the principles he professed, he sacrificed to that impulse every thing which was dear to his heart. Surely the sufferings he has undergone, the unmerited persecution he has endured, his constancy,

his courage, and virtue, form claims which appeal equally to the calm dictates of reason, and the warm feelings of humanity. I hope and trust that the House will do themselves the honour to sanction so virtuous a cause. If the minister should shew himself dead to all the sentiments of humanity, and to the glory of the country, I hope the House will feel with their constituents, and rescue from oppression a person so long the sport of adversity, and the victim of despotism.

Mr. *W. Smith* spoke in favour of the motion. He said, it had been rumoured that there was a possibility M. la Fayette had been confined in this rigorous manner by the Emperor at the request of the Princes of the Blood, the brothers of the late French King; if so, and government chose to interfere, he had not a doubt but on their intimation of a wish of that kind to the Count D'Artois, he might, and would be induced to relinquish his claim on the Emperor's promise of such confinement. The motion did not, he said, require the House to stop supplies to the Emperor till the request was granted; it only requested the House to use its interference, in order to prevail on his Majesty to intercede with the Emperor in behalf of the unfortunate General. The House might very well do this. Neither the Crown nor the Government could be degraded by an act of mercy, and if the House agreed to the motion, the universal voice of the people of Great Britain would approve and applaud their decision.

Mr. *Martin* trusted that the motion would not be resisted. It peculiarly called on the humanity of the House, and he observed with satisfaction, that a great many members returned in the present parliament were young men, from whose feelings a decision that would do honour to them might be justly expected.

Mr. *Hawkins Browne* said, that the question before the House ought to be decided on the simple ground of its own merits, without any reference whatever to the feelings of gentlemen. It was necessary to take it into consideration in a dispassionate manner, otherwise it might with propriety be argued, that a determination influenced by the passions could not be of a very justifiable nature. He viewed, for his own part, the motion in a different point of view, and he could not help thinking, that it was objectionable on many solid grounds, but particularly as it positively stated facts which did not come in an absolute authentic state before the House.

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The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* rose to explain. He declared, that what he had stated on a former occasion directly and positively was, that Government had no participation whatever in the measure which was the object of the motion, and that consequently it could not of itself effect the release of the prisoners detained by the Emperor. There was not the slightest foundation for insinuating that Government was any way concerned in it.

Mr. Grey said, that it was impossible for any man to hear the narrative of the misfortunes of General La Fayette without the most acute feelings of compassion for him and the unfortunate partners of his misery. It was a cause in which it would have well become the government of a great nation to interfere without application. But when he heard it stated that such interference would be inconsistent with the relation in which we stand to the internal police of the government of the House of Austria, he hoped that the House of Commons, as the only remaining resource, would positively direct the application to be made. He felt it unnecessary to go much at length into the subject, after the eloquent and pathetic appeal which had been made to the House by his hon. friend (General Fitzpatrick); and he considered it as a happy omen of the success of his motion, that not one individual had come forward to oppose it, excepting the right hon. gentleman (Mr. Pitt). One honourable gentleman had indeed shewn some disposition to rise, but he supposed that his hands were bound, and that he could not renew the attempt. There was only one point on which he wished to say a few words. The hon. gentleman had alluded to the state of the present negotiation between this country and France; and in this view he was of opinion that it would be extremely politic in this country, now that the government had renounced every idea of interfering in the internal affairs of France, to shew by a publick act that it took no part in punishing any man who had been distinguished in the course of the revolution. It had been stated that this was a case in which it was beyond the competence of the government of this country to interfere; but he contended the fact from which this inference was drawn to have been mistated. La Fayette was not detained as a prisoner of war, but he was confined for something that he had done since the revolution. The best mode therefore of removing all the jealousies which might still subsist between the negotiating powers was, to cease to persecute any person who had acted in that revolution against which the war

was undertaken. He earnestly hoped, therefore, that either the British Government would intercede with the Court of Vienna in behalf of these unfortunate captives, or that the Government of France would stipulate for their release as an article of the treaty.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that the honourable gentleman having thought proper to impute to him a statement, that the confinement of General la Fayette was to be referred to the operation of the municipal law, it was necessary for him to deny expressly such an imputation. He had merely stated the imprisonment, of that gentleman as the act of the Emperor, as a separate transaction, in which that Prince was alone implicated, and for which the other members of the alliance were not answerable.

Mr. *Wilberforce* accused the other side of the House of wishing what they had no right to do, to make a monopoly of feeling, and to suppose that ministers were entirely destitute of those sentiments of compassion which he believed to be common to them with every Member of the House. He professed to entertain an opinion somewhat different from any that had been hitherto expressed. He could not agree with the motion in its present form, because he was not sure that the circumstance of La Fayette's confinement had been prejudicial to the cause of his Majesty and his allies; nor on the other hand did he think it to be a cause in which it was improper for the House to interfere. He was confident that if suspicion was before entertained, that the government of this country was concerned in his confinement, that such a suspicion could not exist after what had fallen from his right hon. friend. He conceived, however, that it was the duty of a great and respectable assembly, to look abroad into the world and to attend to the wants and claims of misery, wherever objects of distress were to be found, and to exercise its influence, or its power, in relieving the distress of suffering humanity, upon an enlarged and disinterested scale. Though he could not vote for the motion, therefore, in its present form, he would have no objection to an amendment, merely submitting to his Majesty the propriety of using his influence with the Court of Vienna for the liberation of the Marquis la Fayette.

General *Fitzpatrick* said, he was desirous to meet the honourable gentleman's ideas by coinciding in his proposition, as it would tend to reconcile the general opinion on the measure. With respect to the honourable gentleman's doubts as to the certainty of the facts alluded to, he could assure him
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that he could, if it were thought necessary, furnish from his private information, such proofs as would place these facts beyond contradiction.

Mr. *Wilberforce* and *General Fitzpatrick* having said a few words in explanation,

Mr. *Wilberforce* moved as an amendment, that in the room of the previous words of the resolution be substituted the following ;

“ Most humbly to submit to his Majesty the propriety of graciously using his good offices with his ally the Emperor, for the liberation of General la Fayette, and Messrs. La Tour Maubeuge, and Pufy.

The amendment being regularly proposed, and the question being put upon it

The *Master of the Rolls* disapproved of the amendment, because when the first words of the motion of the honourable gentlemen were left out, the spirit of the motion was lost. He conceived the motion to have been made on the supposition, that his Britannic Majesty was concerned in the detention of General la Fayette, by his ally the Emperor. And now that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had disavowed having any concern in them atter, he neither could see the propriety of the motion nor of the amendment.

Lord *Hawkebury* was averse to both the original motion and the amendment, though in the choice of alternatives he would rather vote for the latter. When the late royal family of France were in the depth of their misfortunes, he recollected that there was a discussion in the House of Commons, respecting the propriety of adopting some measures in their behalf. The debate was adjourned to the following day, and he remembered that the honourable gentleman opposite to him, (Mr. Fox) stated that he would not give his assent to any address to his Majesty upon the subject, because he was not prepared to take any step in consequence ; by which, he understood him to mean, that he was not prepared, if the measures should prove ineffectual, to agree to go to war. Now he would ask, in the present instance, if the government should intercede with the Court of Vienna in behalf of General la Fayette, whether the House were prepared to break their alliance with Austria in case of the failure of that intercession ? The precedents which had been quoted did not apply to the present case. In the instance of Captain Apgill, the application was made, not by the court, but personally by the Queen of France. There was in his opinion only one ground on which the House would be justified in interfering

interfering, namely, if the conduct of the court of Vienna was notoriously unjust and iniquitous. But of this on the present occasion, the House of Commons were not proper judges, for in the first place they had no authentic statement of facts before them; and in the next place, even though they were in possession of the facts, it would be unjust to pass a decision till the Court of Vienna was heard in its own defence.

Mr *Sheridan* observed that it was not his practice to obtrude himself upon the attention of the House, after a subject was fully discussed by his friends, nor would he have troubled them now, since so little, and that little worse than nothing, had been advanced in opposition to the eloquent and pathetic speech of his honourable friend, had not they been brought into a situation of difficulty, in consequence of the amendment which had been proposed. The honourable gentleman, he believed, had suggested the amendment (at least he gave him credit for the motive) from a wish to render the motion more palatable to the House, and it certainly had met the entire approbation of one honourable gentleman (Mr. Windham) who had shewed signs of being desirous to speak, but who had sitten quite at his ease since the amendment had been proposed. While he was congratulating himself, however, upon the acquisition of the influence, the authority, and what was not the least consideration of that honourable gentleman, he was concerned to find that it had made them lose the vote of a learned gentleman (the Master of the Rolls.) (Here there was a cry of *No! No!*)

He hoped, however, that the motion would not be got rid of by a quibble, but they would come to a fair and intelligible issue, and that conceiving it, as they must, to be an affair in which it was disgraceful for our ally, the Emperor, to act, and in which it was disgraceful for the government of Great Britain not to interfere, they would in a bold and manly way vote an address to his Majesty immediately, to use his influence with the Court of Vienna in behalf of the unfortunate persons who were the subject of that evening's debate. An honourable gentleman asked if they were prepared to break off our alliance with the Emperor, if our intercessions failed of success? In the first place there was no reason to anticipate a failure before the attempt was made, and in the next place, the failure of the attempt by no means implied the necessity of breaking off the alliance. With respect to the precedent of Mr. Apgill which had been disputed, the objection was not well founded, for though the application

application originated in the Queen, it came immediately from the King of France. And in the present instance he was of opinion that it would be infinitely to the honour of those amiable feelings which our own illustrious Queen was well known to possess, were she voluntarily to interfere in behalf of those deserving but unfortunate persons, who are now languishing in hopeless captivity in the dungeons of Olmutz. The gentlemen on the other side of the House seemed to triumph in the silence of the honourable gentleman (Mr. Winham.) And the reason he firmly believed was this—that he might draw aside the mysterious veil from this cruel, barbarous and vindictive proceeding, with that manly and that generous indiscretion by which the House knew his character to be marked. When he rose first, his honourable friend (Mr. Pitt) put him aside, intimating to him, my nothing will be better than your something; my quibbles are better than your sophistry: and if I say nothing to the purpose, at least I will not betray any secret that ought to be concealed. In fact, Mr. Sheridan said, he believed that Mr. Windham's tongue was bound by the same cause as the Emperor's hands, and the House knew pretty well who was the gaoler. As a friend to freedom he should rejoice when General la Fayette recovered his liberty, and as an old friend of Mr. Windham, he should receive no small satisfaction when he recovered his speech. He was sure also that he would not find the House like the adder, which is deaf to the voice of the charmer. He really wished that some other gentleman in his Majesty's councils had come forward; he hoped at least that an amendment would be proposed, that the discussions should not be confined in future to one side of the House, except in cases of special necessity. The right honourable gentleman seemed to feel very acutely upon the subject; the House however, would not give him credit for the reality of those feelings, when they recollected that three years ago he condemned the proceedings against la Fayette, as worthy of the execration of mankind, if the facts alleged were true; and now he came forward affecting still to doubt of their truth, not having taken any measure to ascertain whether they were real or fabulous. He had laid down a regular principle about jurisprudence, which he endeavoured to apply to the case of la Fayette, as if that unfortunate person had been imprisoned for a criminal offence, and not been a prisoner of war. He could see no other motive for the unprecedented rigour which had been employed against that exalted character, than that which was suggested from his
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being a moderate and steady friend to liberty, a motive which was not so likely to influence the ministers of any government in Europe as the present ministers of his Britannic Majesty, ministers, who on all occasions had shewn themselves the enemies of every species of reform, the patrons of every abuse, and whose uniform system it had been to extinguish the spirit of liberty both in this and in other countries. The honourable gentleman had argued that we had no right to interfere, and that if we did interfere we were uncertain of success. To the last of these Mr. Sheridan thought the reply, properly was one little word, "try". With respect to the success likely to attend our interference that could not be ascertained till an application was made. Besides if it was a disgraceful affair, had we no interest in the character of the Emperor? Were we not engaged in a common cause with him for the attainment of a common object. We had been fighting for religion, yet we wanted the humanity and the justice of those whom we had described as its foes. Contrast the conduct of France, since the Revolution. Did not her government make remonstrances at Geneva with her ally on the subject of certain acts of injustice towards individuals suffering under the fiat of that senate. It was one of the charges recorded against Mr. Hastings, that he had suffered allies in India to do an act which disgraced the British name. But why had he recourse to India? Had not the right honourable gentleman compelled the King of Naples and the State of Genoa to take a part against France? He referred to his own authentic papers upon the subject. For the character of General la Fayette he had the highest veneration. He believed him to be a man of high and inflexible honour, and that he might vie with the brightest characters in the English history. To the spirit of a Hampden he united the loyalty of Lord Falkland, and that he too stood where he ought. Had Louis the XVIth. not fallen a sacrifice to the fury of a mob, rendered desperate by the abuses and corruptions of the old government, which had bred up the race of sanguinary monsters, who perpetrated that atrocious act, and had General la Fayette returned to Paris upon the restoration of tranquility, to get the reward of his conduct; if the King had thrown him, his wife, and her daughters into a dungeon, there was not a humane man in Europe would not have said that he ill deserved to re-ascend the throne, and that he ought to have his crown torn from his head. Yet this was the conduct which the regular governments of Europe had pursued to those unfortunate persons

persons, to their eternal shame and disgrace. What added to the cruelty of the punishment was the helplessness of the victim. He was not in a situation when he was taken to be demanded back by the government of France. But, had those foul insinuations, with which his character was attempted in this country to be blackened, been true; had he betrayed his trust, deceived his master, and finally imbrued his hands in the blood of his Sovereign, then he would have been reclaimed by the French government; then the Princes of Europe, trembling at the command of the directory, would have ordered the doors of his prison to be thrown open, and General la Fayette might even have been a member of that directory with which they were now obliged to treat. If the Court of Vienna was mean enough to take advantage of his helpless situation, Mr. Sheridan hoped that the French government, overlooking the past, would reclaim la Fayette and his fellow-sufferers as French Citizens. How much it would suit the generosity and magnanimity of the French Republic; and what a contrast it would be of republican resentment to monarchical gratitude, that from this atheistical government we should learn the principle of the forgiveness of injuries, and lessons of eternal vengeance only from the regular christian governments of Kings!

The *Secretary at War* said, that he was at length enabled to find, that the true cause, the true mystery by which the gentlemen on the other side of the House were influenced in pressing the motion, was fully disclosed. They wished to turn the publick attention to the sufferings of one whom they set up as their champion, whom they exalted as their hero. He was unwilling to take part in the debate at an early moment, as he wished to consider the question in the fullest way, and learn from the copiousness and ingenuity of the friends of humanity and patriotism, whether they could embellish the cause of their favourite, with any additional considerations. An earnest appeal had been made to the feelings of the House, and humanity was the great topic on which the measure seemed to rest. It appeared to him absolutely requisite, before the House came to a decision, to weigh maturely the merits and demerits of the sufferer; to consider his claims in their various relations, and proceed afterwards to a decision. A right honourable gentleman had asked, "Could this country be actuated by monsieur la Fayette's conduct during the American war?" He would answer, No; but yet he could not help saying, that it was rather singular, that a person treated in the most friendly manner in this country, and fresh from our hospitality, should make the requital he

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did in America. But in whatever view his conduct in that respect might be considered, it could not be denied that he was at least a perfect stranger to the country, and that certainly was no small concession in favour of la Fayette. Putting therefore his relation to us out of the question. He wished that he should be considered as a total stranger to this country, as neither possessing merit or demerit, but that his character should be considered merely as an agent to the French revolution. And in this point of view, his motives seem to have been, to say the best of them, of a mixed and ambiguous kind. The actions to which they gave rise certainly had entailed a long and melancholy scene of war and calamities upon his country. His system of acting from the earliest period of the revolution, was nothing different from that pursued by those whose object had been to introduce confusion, and subvert all constituted authorities. They had uniformly marched in that system, and had never desisted from it, till compelled to retire from action by others, who equally corrupt, proved more successful. He did not blame the honourable general for bringing forward the motion then before the House. He believed that the care which he had taken in his behalf, had originated in an early private friendship, the memory of which recent events had not obliterated. And certainly in the speech with which he introduced his motion, he conducted the cause of his friend with much ability, and no common degree of address. Mr. Windham combated the proposition, that la Fayette was not a fair prisoner of war, because he was not acting in hostility to the Emperor at the time, and because he was taken upon neutral territory. With respect to the injustice of his detention there, he denied it. La Fayette had certainly no claims upon this country: he never had been a subject of it, he never had acted in its cause, he was not taken in any of the countries which had surrendered to its arms, nor had he ever served in any of those gallant corps which had been massacred in thousands by their countrymen in cold blood. He never acted upon a common principle, nor made a common cause with this country. When they recurred to the events of the 6th of August, and the 5th and 6th of October, they found circumstances which rendered his character suspicious, and his conduct censurable. What figure did he make at the head of the national guards, when he allowed Berthier to be torn in pieces by the mob, after he had thrown himself under his protection? It might be said that he acted under the influence of terror. But why did he yield to such a feeling? He

He could not have had a more glorious death than if he had fallen on that day. On the 5th and 6th of October he lulled the royal family at Versailles into a false security, and after the murder of the national guards, the Queen scarcely escaped in an undress. But he was willing to pass from these facts to the consideration of his great merit. His defenders appealed from his revolting from his sovereign, and his shaking the fabric of the constitution, to his conduct in saving the King; for this he gave him no credit at all. All it proved was, that there was a time when he was willing to stop. He stopped short when his principles could not be pushed further with benefit to himself, and when he was restrained from executing the plans which he had concerted. Such had been the fate of the other revolutionists from the commencement of the reform. He was surprized, however, that the honourable gentleman opposite to him could forgive him this new treason; this treason against his only true and lawful sovereign, the people. It was one of the numerous inconsistencies into which the supporters of revolutions were betrayed. Here then was a man who had fallen a victim to the consequences of his own acts, which had brought infinite calamity upon his country, in behalf of whom it was moved that the House of Commons do address his Majesty to interfere. This brought him to the great question of the humanity of the interference. He believed the facts alledged respecting the severities of his confinement to be all exaggerated, and in great part entirely unfounded. But allowing this to be perfectly correct, there was no case of humanity which ought to be abstractly considered. There was no man in a state of confinement who was not in greater or less degree an object of compassion; but feeling on all occasions of this nature ought to be regulated by causes and circumstances. Collot Herbois, who was exiled to Guinea, after having massacred 3000 innocent men, was still in some degree an object of compassion; and in this instance also the honourable gentlemen, obeying the dictates of their humanity, might say, Poor Collot Herbois! let us forget the past, and recal him home. His humanity, Mr. Windham said, would not allow him to indulge such a species of compassion. He considered the lot of the thousands who were wandering in poverty and exile through every country of Europe, and who, with intentions at least as good, were subjected to misery as great as General la Fayette's. Were there not in every country criminal confinements, and imprisonments for debt, attended by various circumstances that were adequate to excite the most tender feelings, to the full as affect-

ing as the confinement of Monsieur la Fayette? Did the gentleman entertain no sympathy for the heart-rending sufferings of that champion of the rights of man, Collot d'Herbois? They surely could not in justice separate the effects of la Fayette's patriotism from those produced by the dignified exertions of the amiable character to which he alluded. But if they did not feel for the acknowledged friends of the human race, they might turn their eyes at home, they might look at their own streets and behold men of superior rank, talents, and virtue, suffering penury of the severest kind; nay, what was even worse, afflicted with the privation of their dearest ties; and what made their miseries peculiarly distressing, many of them were persons whose honour and integrity had never been exposed to the breathings of suspicion. Since the name of the Queen of France had been mentioned, he would relate to the House a circumstance which he had from persons of the most undoubted veracity, and who had lived on terms of the most intimate friendship with her Majesty. The Queen declared, long before her death, "that there was but one person in France whom she could never forgive, and that person was Monsieur la Fayette." She added, "that were Barnave to be exposed to danger, she would, were it in her power, rush between him and death." It seemed extraordinary that amid all the miseries, and all the horrors with which the world was afflicted, the breasts of the honourable gentlemen should be so flat and callous to every distress but that of la Fayette. When one half of France was murdering the other half, they expressed none of these trembling anxieties with which they were impressed on his account alone. How did it happen that amid all these scenes of ruin and devastation the burthen of their song, the *formula* of their language, was continually the unnecessary and detestable war? But why did they forget the author of that war, the primary cause of all the calamities which it produced? Why did they forget their favourite champion la Fayette? Thus it appeared, that their humanity was chimerical and fanciful, or at least partial. He would contend that there was a decorum due to another country, and which the measure proposed went to violate. He knew nothing more mean or more contemptible than the pitiful desire of evincing generosity at the expence of other people; and such would be the result of the motion, were it carried into execution. Dean Swift had very judiciously observed, "that he never knew a man that could not bear other mens misfortunes like a christian." And this observation might be very faithfully

faithfully applied to the honourable gentlemen. They bore indeed the misfortunes of the House of Austria like true christians, for they never took the least notice of them, nor wasted their time in ridiculous expressions of compassion. The gentlemen upon the other side of the House seemed to feel very acutely for M. la Fayette's situation, while they paid no regard to the many miserable victims who in consequence of his rashness were doomed to a state of penury and exile. An excellent writer, and one whose principles of humanity were never disputed, has observed, that "no man can feel at the same time for the oppressor and the oppressed." He was precisely of that opinion, and therefore, before he could sympathise with the gentlemen upon the other side in the misfortunes of M. la Fayette, whom, in an original degree, he was forced to consider as an oppressor, he must first look around him, and condole with the wretched beings whose calamities were in a great measure caused by the active part which he took in the commencement of the French revolution. The lower orders of people might be pardoned, both on account of their ignorance and their condition, for their interference in a revolution, since they were biased by the hope of great, immediate, and necessary personal advantages; but no such excuse could be alledged in favour of men of large fortunes, and of more enlightened understandings, who brought about a revolution; and if ever a revolution were to happen in this country, he should not affix half so much blame to those whom

"The oppressor" wrong, the proud man's contumely,

"The law's delay, and insolence of office,"

had urged on to the commission of acts of violence, as to those who should have originally induced them to it. The gentlemen on the other side, however, put by all these considerations; they neither regarded the "bitter weepings" of the widow, nor the sorrows of the orphan: they forgot all the horrible calamities which had ensued; they cared not for the persecuted priest nor for the violated nun. Indeed, they seemed to have very little "nun's flesh" about them. Such men as M. la Fayette might, from a sort of enthusiastic zeal, be eager to rush precipitately into dangers, the evil consequences of which they could not or they would not foresee, but it was worthy observation to remark how they would wince when called on to taste "the cup of calamity." He had no hesitation in saying, that he felt very little consideration for the beginners of
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revolutions. M. de la Fayette had been the first to attack the monarchy of France and he stopt short when he found that his own mischievous principles were turning against his views, though he had no objection to continuing the King upon his throne, provided that he might be Viceroy over him. He could not feel for a man who was the author of a conflict that led to such horrors. Well or ill intentioned, la Fayette had been the author of the attack of the ancient system, which led to all these massacres; and he should ever hold out as objects of marked reprobation, and of punishment, the beginners of revolutions. Besides, how could they enter into all the views of the Emperor? There might be political motives mixed with the measure, of which they could not judge. It was well known that there were persons both in France and out of it, who were anxious to exalt M. de la Fayette as the grand champion of liberty, that they might be able to cabal with him, to raise a new standard, and to bring about new revolutions in France and elsewhere. How could gentlemen tell then, that the conduct of the Emperor might not be dictated by a wise and prudent policy, to keep this man fast, and prevent his committing new horrors? It was curious too that though there were two more persons in the same gaol with M. de la Fayette, he alone was mentioned by way of excellence; he alone was the theme of condolence, by these persons who made the war the eternal burthen of their song, but who never felt for the many thousands of unhappy victims which that war had made, and of which war the authors of the revolution must be considered as the true authors. For his own part, he could never separate the actions of men from the claims they had on the humanity of others. He did not wish to make any parade of humanity himself, but when he was called upon to sympathise in the sufferings of it. La Fayette! he found his humanity *for him* checked by the remembrance of the ills which he had been the author of, while it flowed through infinite and more extensive channels for the sad inheritors of the woes which he created. The question for the House to judge of then, was not a question of individual humanity for the personal misfortunes of M. la Fayette, but it was a question of policy and propriety, of general policy and general calamity. With an example so dreadful, and with no other reasons than what had been adduced, the House could not, in his opinion, adopt any mode of interference; and prompted by these ideas, he should certainly

tainly give his negative both to the original motion and to the amendment, because otherwise it would be only putting a premium on the commencement of a revolution, and holding out a reward to those who should promote it.

Mr. Fox answered the Secretary at War with warmth. The right hon. gentleman, had shewn himself to be counsel against M. de la Fayette, and like an advocate, he had endeavoured to search through all his life for accusations against him. In this course, however, he had brought some heavy charges indeed upon the Emperor. According to the right hon. gentleman, no hypocrisy could be more glaring than that of the Emperor, for the declarations which he had made were not the true motives of his conduct. He was said to be detained on account of the particular enmity which the late Queen of France bore towards him. It so happened, however, that two more persons were confined with him, who were not hateful to the Queen. M. de Maubourg and M. de Pufy, one of whom, the latter, was known to be particularly attached to the interests of the Royal Family. But if this were really the cause of their treatment, how comes it that others who had been even active in voting the king's death should have been relieved by the Emperor? Why, but they had the formidable republic of France for their friends, and that M. de la Fayette and his unhappy companions were unprotected, and had no powerful friend to stand up for them. The right hon. gentleman had discovered also that it might be owing to policy. The Emperor might dread that M. de la Fayette would enter into a cabal for bringing about a new revolution in France. So the right hon. gentleman was in truth become the ally of the French Republic—he was negotiating for the Directory—he was anxious to save them from the peril of new conspiracies and new machinations. Even before the treaty of peace was signed he was serving the French Government. The hon. gentleman charged them with not commiserating the other victims of the revolution—the emigrant nobles, and other persons who crowded our streets. Mr. Fox said, that he could not name a single occasion when they had failed to treat the misfortunes of these persons with commiseration; though undoubtedly they had not manifested it in the same way as the ministers of this country. They had not sent them to perish at Quiberon, nor seduced them by promises which were never fulfilled, into situations where no gallantry could save them from the danger to which they were exposed; nor had they refused, even to their memories, the performance

performance of their dying request, in justifying their honour from the disgrace of having advised an enterprise so frantic. But, good God, what sentiments and what doctrines had they not heard that night! What arguments had not the right hon. gentleman advanced!—"Well or ill-intentioned"—M. de la Fayette ought not to be pardoned because he was the beginner of the French revolution—he was not to be pardoned because thousands had fallen through his means. If he was not to be pardoned because thousands had fallen, what must become of the right hon. gentleman himself, and of the minister of England, who had caused rivers of blood to flow by their wild and horrid enterprises? But the beginners of revolutions were the persons to be punished, however moderate and honourable in their views, however patriotic in their conduct, and whatever benefits they may have rendered to their country! Those who came after the beginners, and who might tarnish the cause of liberty by their excesses, were to be pardoned, but not the first beginners! According to this new doctrine, our great ancestors, to whom we have been accustomed to pay almost divine honours for the glorious services they have rendered to man, were men to be execrated and abhorred. Cromwell was a man to be excused by the right hon. gentleman, because he found things prepared, and only took advantage of circumstances; but Hampden, Pym, Lord Falkland, the Earl of Bedford, and all the illustrious men whom we have been accustomed to reverence, as having not merely rescued their country from intolerable evils, but pursued in their reforms the principle of the most generous humanity, and the most disinterested moderation, were objects of eternal execration. Hume was, he thought, severe enough upon Hampden when he said, that he probably died at the favourable moment for his fame, since, if he had lived, he might perhaps have betrayed principles of violent ambition! But this was nothing to the argument of the hon. gentleman; since the men who blackened the cause of liberty by their crimes were virtuous in comparison of those who desired only to rescue their country from tyranny, corruption and abuse. Such was the whole jet of his argument. Collot d'Herbois, according to him, was no object of royal persecution equal to La Fayette: for Collot was a monster whose crimes would defile the cause. Liberty so tarnished could never be attractive, nor recommend itself by the purity and benevolence of its principles. It is not therefore the Collots that they hate, but the Fayettes, who, by the unsullied patriotism of their motives,
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and undeviating rectitude of their conduct, prove that true liberty is the parent and companion of all the milder virtues of the heart. Mr. Fox said, he scorned to allude to any private transactions, but he believed that it was well known to many gentlemen in that House, that the right hon. Secretary at War was an admirer of the French revolution in its first stages; he now, however, arguing from the violences with which its course had been tarnished, condemned the very principle of the reform of all abuses, and was for perpetuating the misery of the human race. Mr. Fox then shewed that La Fayette and his friends were distinguished for their moderation. They had sacrificed their popularity to this principle: it was well known that, after the 10th of October, the chief command of the armies of the Republic was offered to M. de la Fayette. Now, if he had accepted of that offer, if he had shared in all the violences that followed, he might at this day be one of the Directory; and the right hon. Secretary, instead of pursuing the unhappy prisoner with vengeance, might be imploring the powerful Directors by an ambassador at Paris to grant peace to England!

Mr. Dundas gave his thanks to Mr. Windham for his very powerful and instructive speech, which had corrected all the false and delusive notions which had been sported that night. He was an enemy to these pretexts. The gentlemen in opposition had given up their original question, and adopted the amendment of his honourable friend (Mr. Wilberforce) in the hope of collecting all the straggling humanity of the House. He turned round to Mr. Wilberforce, and in a vein of ironical compliment appealed to his understanding against the officious character of his humanity. Every one knew how he bustled in the cause of charity, how every tale of woe was addressed to him, how no misfortune could happen in this world, but his heart must bleed, no sorrow must be felt, but his bosom must be wrung. But why could he not feel in secret? Why could he not go about doing good and blush to find it fame? Why must the House of Commons be made a party to the heroics of his humanity? Why must they be made the instrument of his good works? In his mind the House had no business to interfere. They would put his Majesty into a very awkward predicament. Suppose that the answer should be that his Imperial Majesty could not comply with the request, for reasons which it was not convenient to explain. He applauded the liberal, eloquent, and gentlemanly manner of the right honourable mover of the original question, but said that he had

not equal reason to compliment the gentlemen who followed him. In his opinion the force and feeling of his opening speech had been diminished by all that followed it.

The amendment was not liable to the objection of the original motion, which he considered as a direct attack upon the Emperor ; but he appealed to the House whether the whole was not a question involving peace and war. The adoption of the amendment would be merely giving up a proposition to catch the stray humanity of the House ; and as it would make its way to Vienna, would be the means of displeasing a useful Ally. As to the honourable gentleman who proposed the amendment, he had no need to be guilty of such irregularity to justify his humanity, since no one ever doubted it. An address of the House of Commons to the Crown ought never to be used but upon grave and solemn occasions ; and in the present instance, where advice was to be given to another crowned head, when they did not know what forcible reasons he might have for detaining la Fayette, the application might be attended with a refusal, for reasons which it might not be possible to disclose, and then what would be the alternative ? Besides the motion might lay an imputation on the character of the Emperor, and make it believed in Germany, that he was not supported and beloved in Great Britain at a time when he had put his Empire at stake. He, therefore, thought the House would lose its understanding and its judgment, if it voted either the motion or the amendment.

Mr. Jekyll rose in reply to Mr. Secretary Dundas ; he observed that the right honourable gentleman had not kept the promise he had made in some parts of his speech ; namely, that of arguing the point before the House, but had confined himself to mere preface and declamation. He had indeed been severe on the *irregular* and *fragging* humanity of one honourable gentleman (Mr. Wilberforce) in which he had the honour of concurring with the right honourable Secretary. There was an irregularity in many of that honourable gentleman's virtues ; in his love of public liberty, and in his love of peace. The right nonourable gentleman had said we were not to dictate terms of humanity. Humanity certainly should be spontaneous, but where it was wanting the inculcation of it did honour to any body of men. His Majesty's ministers did not on a former occasion attend to the calls of humanity, however, forcibly and affectingly they were made by his right honourable friend Mr. Fox. He alluded to the proposition once suggested of interposing to save the
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the life of the unfortunate Louis XVI. by a national address to those who exercised the powers of government in France. The right honourable Secretary at War had collected from anecdotes that the unfortunate Queen of France had declared she could never forgive M. de la Fayette. If those anecdotes were well founded in fact, still the possible prejudices of that Princess ought not to weigh in a case like the present, and at all events, could not affect the persons of M. Bureau de puy and M. de la Tour de Maubourg. At so late an hour, Mr. Jekyll said he would trespass no farther on the indulgence of the House, but trusted to their own feelings and justice.

General *Fitzpatrick* concluded with a short reply to the objections. He had acquiesced in the amendment proposed, because he thought that the question still embraced all the essential points which he had in view. He had listened to the speech of the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Windham); besides a very violent attack upon the principle of revolutions, in which was comprehended every endeavour to meliorate the condition of our species, it was no other than an ingenious and well-directed philippic against his friend Mr. Pitt; and the symptoms of feeling which he had manifested on the present occasion. The attack on the character of M. de la Fayette required little answer. Four years ago he had vindicated him against all the reproaches that were spread with so much virulence against him. Now they were renewed with an increase of bitterness, and as if they had not been refuted. In regard to Berthier's murder, the affair was perfectly understood. It was a violent tumult which no exertion could avert. La Fayette had been appointed commander of the national guard, but the day before, and they were not brought into discipline. In regard to the 5th and 6th of October, he had been hurried to Versailles by the guard. It was not his own intention to go thither, but his presence had done great good: it had probably saved the lives of the Royal Family. He could only say, in answer to the report attributed to the Queen, upon the authority of a gentleman who was in England when he made his motion before, that the Queen declared to him that she owed her life to the good offices of M. de la Fayette. He had abstained from all reflection on the memory of that unfortunate Queen. Perhaps it would be more generous in the honourable gentleman to have observed the same rule. With regard to the charge of the castle that night, he had asked it, and it had been refused; and in regard to being re-

tired to repose when the tumult broke out, and their Majesties were forced to quit the palace, it was not to be wondered that after being sixty hours without sleep, he should seek for a little refreshment. General Fitzpatrick said, that he had but two points in view in the motion: 1st. to relieve the unfortunate persons; and, secondly, to vindicate the honour of Great Britain. He had abstained from going into the pretensions of the other two persons, the fellow prisoners of M. de la Fayette. The one had been married but a few months before to a beautiful woman, who went to Vienna to solicit for her husband, but not having taken the precaution of a concealed name, she had been ordered to quit the Austrian territories, just as Alex. Lameth had been ordered to quit England, and hurried away in 24 hours. The other prisoner was the father of eight children, and Mallet du Pan calls him an estimable and irreproachable character. The General concluded with a warm appeal to the generosity of the House.

The House then divided:---

<i>Ayes,</i>	-	-	-	-	-	50
<i>Noes</i>	-	-	-	-	-	132
<i>Majority,</i>	-	-	-	-	-	82

The question was therefore negatived.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

SATURDAY, *December 17.*

Mr. *Hobart* brought up the report from the Committee of Supply. It was a resolution for the pay and clothing the Militia for the year 1797. The resolutions were read and agreed to.

Mr. *Long* brought up the report of the Eighteen Million Loan bill. The amendments were read and agreed to. The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time on Monday, if then engrossed.

Mr. *Long* brought up also the report of the Stage Coach New Duty bill. The amendments were read, agreed to, and the bill ordered to be engrossed, and to be read a third time on Monday, if then engrossed.

MESSAGE FROM THE KING.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* brought up a Message from his Majesty, which was read from the Chair, as follows:

"GEORGE

"GEORGE, R.

"His Majesty thinks proper to acquaint the House of Commons, that he is at present engaged in concerting measures with his allies, in order to be fully prepared for the vigorous and effectual prosecution of the war, if the failure of his Majesty's earnest endeavours to effect a general peace, on secure and honourable terms, should unfortunately render another campaign unavoidable. And his Majesty will not fail to take the first opportunity to communicate the result of these discussions to the House. In the interval his Majesty conceives that it may be of the greatest importance to the common cause, that his Majesty should be enabled to continue such temporary advances for the service of the Emperor as may be indispensibly necessary, with a view to military operations being prosecuted with vigour and effect at an early period; and his Majesty recommends it to the House to consider of making such provision as may appear to them to be most expedient for this purpose.

"G. R."

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* then moved, that his Majesty's Message be taken into consideration on Monday next.

Ordered.

Deferred the other orders of the day to Monday.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, December 19.

Heard Mr. Grant, as counsel for the appellant, in the Scots appeal, Mackenzie, ver. Scott. Counsel for the respondent were not heard.—Their Lordships, on the suggestion of the Lord Chancellor, affirmed the judgment of the Court of Session, and attached 100*l.* costs to the appealing party.

The several bills on the table (all private ones) were read in their respective stages.

MESSAGE FROM THE KING.

The *Lord Chancellor* quitted the woofsack, and presented a Message from his Majesty, which was read by the clerk, and appeared to be *substantially* the same with that delivered last Saturday to the House of Commons, by the *Chancellor of the Exchequer*.

His Majesty's Message was ordered to be taken into consideration next day, and their Lordships to be summoned on the occasion.

The Loan bill was brought up by Mr. *Hobart* from the House of Commons; as was also the Dutch Property bill. These were read a first time.

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Two private bills were received. After which an adjournment took place.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, *Dec. 19.*

Mr. *Rose* brought up the bill for the better raising of the Militia in the Tower Hamlets ; which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time the next day.

Mr. Serjeant *Adair* said, that as it was the general wish of gentlemen to give the Quakers bill a full discussion in the committee ; and as, from the present state of public business and the near approach of the holidays, that object was not likely to be attained, he should move, that the House resolve itself into a committee upon that bill on Friday, the 17th of February, wishing it to be understood, that he did not mean to consent to any further procrastination of a business of so much importance to individuals and the public.

The Committee on the Quakers bill was therefore postponed.

The Dutch Property bill was read a third time, and passed.

The House resolved itself into a Committee of Ways and Means.

A resolution for providing the pay and cloathing of the militia out of the land tax was agreed to, the House was resumed, and the report ordered to be received the next day.

The loan Bill was read a third time and passed.

The report of the additional Postage Bill was brought up.

POSTAGE DUTY BILL.

Mr. *Dent*, upon the comparison of the great produce and net revenue of the Post-office recommended to his honourable friend (Mr. Long) to consider the expence with which the business of the Post-office was attended, arising from the number of official franks and other causes. He enumerated in detail the various items contained in that paper respecting the expences attending that office in its different departments, and said, he thought that considerable retrenchments might be made. He suggested the propriety of putting the packets on the footing of the mail coaches, by defraying their charges by means of passengers. Finally, he said, that he threw out these hints for the consideration of his right honourable

nourable friend (the Chancellor of the Exchequer), and expressed a wish that the papers should be printed.

The report was read and agreed to with the amendment, and the Bill ordered to be read a third time the next day, if then, engrossed.

Mr. Grey moved for an account of the sums paid in for the liquidation of the Imperial three *per cent.* annuities. Ordered.

HIS MAJESTY'S MESSAGE.

The Order of the Day for taking into consideration his Majesty's most gracious message being moved, and the message being read—

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* rose, and said, that important as his Majesty's most gracious message might seem, with a view to the situation and interests of this country, as well as to the situation and interests of Europe; important as it might seem to the vigorous and effectual prosecution of the war or the possibility and hope of the speedy restitution of peace; and important as it might seem, even if that desirable event should not take place, to be fully prepared for the other alternative, yet he had the satisfaction of finding the grounds to be simple and so short, that he should have occasion to trespass upon the time and attention of the House for a few minutes only, since he trusted there would be no difference of opinion. He had formerly stated to the House, what he thought would be the probable amount of the expences and provisions for the service of the present year, providing, at the same time, for any extraordinary or unforeseen expences which might also be probably incurred. He had also stated to the House, upon a former occasion, that it would probably be necessary to furnish his Majesty's ally, the Emperor, with some further pecuniary assistance, to enable him to prosecute the war with vigour and effect; the amount of which he had comprised in the sum of three millions. Some advances to the Emperor the House was apprized already had been made out of the provision for the extraordinaries; and his Majesty now thought proper to acquaint the House of Commons, that he is at present engaged in concerting measures with his allies, in order to be fully prepared for either alternative, a vigorous and effectual prosecution of the war, or a secure, general, and honourable peace; and had thereby been induced to call upon that House for their assistance. The message of his majesty was confined, therefore, to the discussions of being fully prepared for the vigorous and effectual prosecution of the war, upon the hope of its accelerating

lerating a secure, general, and honourable peace; or if his Majesty's earnest endeavours to accomplish that object should prove ineffectual, and unfortunately render another campaign unavoidable, then to enable his Majesty, in concert with his allies, to prosecute the campaign with vigorous and powerful exertions. His Majesty had been furthermore pleased to assure the House, that the result of the measures which he was concerting with his allies should, at the first opportunity, be laid before him. In the mean time, however, and during the doubtful uncertainty of prosecuting war, or obtaining peace, his Majesty conceived it to be of the greatest importance to the common cause, to make application to the representatives of the people at an early period, to enable him to continue such temporary advances for the service of the Emperor as might be indispensibly necessary for either event: and to consider of making such provisions as might be most expedient for that purpose. The House was to remember, that, by acceding to his Majesty's propositions, and concerting with him in the necessary measures for the these great and salutary ends; it might give to Europe and to this country the hope and chance of peace, or enable his Majesty to contest with every difficulty, if not surmount them, towards the attainment of that desirable object. To be prepared indifferently for the speedy completion of peace, and for the vigorous and effectual exertion of war, was his Majesty's most earnest wish, and assuredly this was the best and most serviceable mode of proceeding in any supposable situation. So clear a proposition, indeed, it would be improper to argue; and such a mode of proceeding being absolutely necessary for the success of our negotiation, it would be equally improper to abandon the hopes and prospects of that negotiation at such a crisis, by any opposition to the measures which his Majesty was concerting. The House was accordingly called upon not to discontinue such advances to the Emperor as might be indispensibly necessary, with a view to the vigorous and effectual prosecution of the military operations in the next campaign, if such a campaign should be unavoidable. This he hoped and trusted the House would accede to, especially when he had further to remind them, that under the temporary pressures of last year, such advances had been made as produced that great and glorious change in the political affairs of Europe, which he considered as a circumstance of additional encouragement to afford a sanction to the adoption of similar measures when they were

constructed in a different degree. It would be too sanguine for him to say, that the difficulties and inconveniencies of the last year were wholly removed, but, nevertheless, he thought it would become the House to adopt that mode of proceeding in making remittances to the Emperor, which in more difficult times had been found practicable and expedient. Upon these grounds, though it might be prudent in some degree to limit the extent of the amount which might be necessary for the assistance of the Emperor, in the further prosecution of the war, he conceived it would be wise and expedient to leave to the discretion of the executive government, the distribution, proportion, and the mode in which the advances should be made. It was his intention, therefore, to move an humble address of thanks to his Majesty for his most gracious message, and to assure him, that the House would take the measures he proposed into consideration, and afterwards refer the message to a committee of supply, to vote that a sum not exceeding 500,000*l.* should be granted to his Majesty for the assistance of his ally the Emperor; and that such temporary advances should be made as his Majesty's ministers should deem advisable. Having stated this, he concluded by moving the address, which was, as usual, an echo of the message.

*Sir *William Pulteney* said, he totally disapproved of the mode by which it was proposed to give the aid to the Emperor, and he likewise disapproved the words in which the address was couched. They seemed intended to white-wash the conduct of the right honourable gentleman, and to imply that no censure had been expressed against the manner in which advances to the Emperor had already been made, though there certainly was conveyed in the amendment, which passed on a former night, a disapprobation of his conduct, and he was sure would be considered as such for an hundred years to come. The words of the address implied, that the mode formerly adopted was to be followed. He could not however but disapprove of that mode. The right honourable gentleman had defended himself the preceding night chiefly in a commercial view, but the argument he then supported was refuted by an account upon the table. Last year a very favourable loan had been made, and a person who had been disappointed in obtaining the contract, Mr. Morgan, stated that he never calculated upon a loan of three millions, because he conceived it impossible to be carried into effect. Upon a former night an honourable gentleman (Mr. S.

Thornton), a director of the Bank, had told the House that a deputation from the Bank had waited upon the minister, and informed him that such a measure would be highly injurious to the commercial interests of the country. It was well known what was the true meaning of an advice from a powerful body, such as from the House of Commons to his Majesty, however mild might be the terms in which it was conveyed. Of this the right honourable gentleman seemed to be aware. With regard to the discount upon navy bills, formerly it had been the practice to pay the contractors in this way, but to make up for the discount they were in use to charge it upon the amount of their demand. Those who received navy bills in payment were not interested in making the discount low, because they were allowed for the rate which the discount bears. From comparing the different rates of discounts of navy bills at the time when the right honourable gentleman had yielded to the idea that it was impossible to remit a loan publicly to the Emperor, it appeared that the discount then was not lower than it had been since the navy bills were funded, a measure from which so much advantage was expected by the right honourable gentleman. From the mode which had been adopted, the Emperor could not know the extent of the assistance he was to receive, nor in this way could it have the proper effect upon his exertions. In fact the Chancellor of the Exchequer had relied upon the statements given by the Bank, and had not derived his information from the state of the country. There were several causes which had produced the embarrassment that then prevailed. The Bank altered their mode of accommodation in the way of discounts, and took their revenge on the country for the measures of the right honourable gentleman, in clandestinely remitting sums to the Emperor. The right honourable gentleman seemed desirous to do the same. He wished to have the Emperor in his power, that he might influence him in the negotiations for peace. Did he wish to act by him in the same manner as this country had done at the treaty of Utrecht, and have it in his power to leave him in the lurch if he refused to co-operate in the measures that were in hand for peace? The proper way was fairly to come forward with a specific loan. The Emperor did not ask a subsidy; he disdained it. It was by a vote of parliament for the purpose that it should be done. The exertions of the Emperor had saved Europe and this country, for the French would certainly have attempted an invasion here, had they succeeded

succeeded against Austria. The Executive Directory of France, in order that they might reconcile the people to the policy of acceding to the terms which this country should propose, seemed in this critical moment to have made public the exhausted state of their army, and their want of resources, that the propositions being accepted, the Emperor might be left alone, or forced to agree to any terms. The Emperor had rather shewn a backwardness to the whole business of negotiation which had been going on, and he was shocked with the idea of any influence being used to induce him to act contrary to his opinion and inclination. A particular sum ought therefore to be specifically voted in the way of loan. He should therefore move as an amendment, that the whole of the Address, after the words 'most expedient,' should be left out.

Mr. *Bontine* (member for Dunbartonshire) seconded the amendment.

Mr. *Samuel Thornton* said, that, as the hon. Baronet had alluded to what had fallen from him on a former night, with respect to the Bank, he thought it necessary to correct the honourable Baronet where he appeared to have misunderstood him. The Bank had opposed the remittance of money from this kingdom, because the twenty-four gentlemen, who were in the direction of it, conceived that such a measure was not, at the time at which it was proposed, well suited to the pecuniary circumstances of the country. But this opinion had not taken its rise in their minds from any regard to the discount of navy bills; it was founded on two points—on an observation of the course of exchange with Hamburg becoming very low, and on the reduced price which bullion bore in the market. In what the honourable baronet had said with respect to the discounts of the Bank, he was (Mr. Thornton) believed he could assure him, misinformed and mistaken.

Mr. *Nicholls* considered it as very dangerous in the present scarcity of specie, to send money out of the country. He thought that the Directors of the bank should be brought to the bar to give information to the House upon this subject. It was well known to every banker that silver coin bore a premium and a friend of his had even told him that he gave two *per cent.* for it. He considered this advance 500,000*l.* as but the commencement of a system of sending money out of the country, which, in his opinion, would be attended with the most dangerous consequences.

Mr. *Dent* defended the conduct of the bank, and hoped that government and the bank would always go hand in hand,

and if any idea was entertained of setting up any other body in opposition to it, he was convinced would be merely a bank in the air. It was impossible that could exist.

Mr. Fox said, he thought he should have acted improperly if he did not take notice of the subject which was now before the House. He should however do it very shortly. It was now a fact not disputed, that a large sum of money had been sent to the Emperor during the sitting of parliament, and no intimation whatever was given of that event to the House. The sum which was now proposed was, to him, a trifling consideration, when compared to the danger of the principle on which it was proposed to be voted, and the practice which the minister might follow it up with, since after this vote he might send money to the Emperor without the knowledge of parliament, in the same way as he had done already. Suppose the House granted the sum of 500,000*l.* as now proposed; and suppose also, that the House should express itself in the clearest manner as to the mode in which this money was to be applied. What then? The minister would, in the mean time, advance much more money to the Emperor as he should think fit, or if he should think fit, he would withhold any part or the whole of it. The House might express themselves in their address to his Majesty as correctly as they pleased; they might limit the application of the money in what way they please; the minister would afterwards pursue his own plan, and apply the money as he should think fit; he would afterwards, whenever he condescended to address parliament on the subject, tell them that it was true he did not apply the money specifically as voted by the House, for that the exigencies of the publick service required he should apply it in another manner, that unforeseen events occurred which required that he should make such disposition of it. This would not be new conduct in the present minister, for the House had lately found that he had issued large sums of money before he deigned to come to parliament to ask for it. In the opinion of some persons that might be a very proper way of carrying on the affairs of government. Some might think that the minister might come to parliament at any time; to which he must say, that his chief objection was to the House of Commons carrying on such a farce and delusion to the publick by pretending that it had any thing to do with the ways and means, over which he pretended to have a controul. He would vote for the amendment, because it tended, in some degree,

degree, to shew that delusion to the publick. He had listened, and he ought to listen, with great attention to the hon. Baronet who proposed the amendment, and he was ready to confess, although there were some parts of his speech which he agreed with perfectly, there were other parts with which he could not agree. The latter was the case with regard to what the honourable Baronet had said of the Bank. He conceived that the House of Commons had nothing to do with the mode in which the Bank managed their discounts. The Bank, in his opinion, were the sole judges of the manner in which they should manage their discounts. The publick as he conceived, had no right to interfere in that business, nor had the House of Commons any authority upon the subject. It was not in his opinion their business to express either praise or censure upon the conduct of the Bank with regard to discounts. But if the House had what it ought to have, what it formerly had, the controul of the finance of the country, and the Bank were compelled to adopt a certain mode different from their usual one, that is, to narrow their discounts, in consequence of the conduct of the House in financial affairs, then indeed the observations of the honourable baronet would be very applicable to the subject before the House, for certain it was, that the conduct of the House might compel the Bank to narrow their discounts, supposing the House to have the controul of the application of publick money. He was at that time questioning how far we ought to advance money to the Emperor. He was not saying we should not, or ought not to send to the Emperor any more money, for that was not the topic which he wished to discuss at present. He could not help observing, however, that if we were at all events to give to the Emperor any further pecuniary aid, it would be better in the shape of a subsidy than that of a loan; for he thought the security of the repayment of a loan to be such as was very precarious; besides, in its nature a loan was a thing of all things the most improper to trust a minister with the management of, especially after what they had seen of the conduct of the parties already. When they granted a subsidy they stipulated at least for something as an equivalent; when they made a loan the probability of repayment was to be reflected on, which was not, in his opinion, very great, when he considered the nature of the security. The House therefore, instead of entrusting all these things to the minister, ought to confide in its own judgment. That was in some measure the object of the amendment, and therefore he should vote for it; but after all,

all, if the House did not interfere in the conduct of the minister in sending money out of the country, all they could do upon this amendment would amount to nothing but a delusion to the people, telling them that the House had taken the publick purse into their own hands. He wished the House to consider these things properly.

Mr. *Grey* agreed in the sentiments uttered by his right honourable friend upon this subject; he agreed in part also with the honourable baronet who had moved the amendment. His right honourable friend had preferred a subsidy to a loan; and why did he? Undoubtedly his right honourable friend had stated correctly the nature of the security. It was, in his opinion, essential that the House should consider the nature of that security not only to the public, but also to the subscribers who had embarked in the Austrian loan, under the faith and authority of parliament. The House should advert to what had been done in the loan to the Emperor, in which there were two points to be considered—the interest of the money, and the 92,000*l.* which the Emperor was to provide for the reduction of the capital which was at this time in arrear. This being the case, the House ought to know the security they had to trust to. The Emperor had failed in the first of his engagements in a certain degree, and totally with regard to another part of that engagement, for no such remittance as that of the promised 92,000*l.* had taken place in point of fact. Instead of sending ninety thousand pounds a-year for the purpose of forming a sinking fund, he made no remittance, and no sinking fund had taken place. By this failure, the security had been injured; and this was proved by the difference between the three per cent consols, and the Imperial three per cents. He owned that it had been a matter of curiosity with him, to know why the latter were always three per cent lower in value than the former; this, however, had been explained by the papers laid on the table, and must be imputed to the failure of the Emperor to perform what he had stipulated to do. The three per cent. consols were kept up in value by the operation of the sinking fund. The Imperial three per cents. fell lower than the consols, because the possessors of that stock had not the same security. The publick here had therefore suffered by that event, and the holders of stock were materially affected. The minister talked much of those qualities which are the necessary companions of valour, particularly that of good faith in pecuniary concerns. Now, giving his Imperial Ma-
jesty

jeſty credit for theſe qualities, he wiſhed to know what expectation the Houſe had of the repayment of any future loan, when it found he had not fulfilled the engagements he had already made on others. But the ſum at that time to be voted, as his right honourable friend had ſaid already, was to him, comparatively of little importance when placed by that of the conduct of the miniſters towards that Houſe in matters of finance. He wiſhed to know what the miniſter could ſay on the fraudulent account which he cauſed to be laid before the Houſe the laſt year, in answer to a motion of his upon the vote of credit? When he asked how the vote of credit was applied, he ſaid, that part had been applied to the army, part to the navy, and part to the ordnance. It now appeared, however, that a very conſiderable part of that ſum (1,400,000l) had been applied to the ſupport of the army under the prince of Conde, and other foreign objects. He put it therefore to the Houſe whether they would allow the miniſter not only to ſend money out of the country when he thinks proper, but alſo to permit him to lay falſe accounts of the application of that money before the Houſe.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* ſaid he ſhould not have thought neceſſary to have troubled the Houſe at that time, but that the honourable gentleman had ſaid ſomething that required an answer. The honourable gentleman who ſupported the amendment, ſeemed to rely a great deal upon the argument that it was better at once to give a ſum by way of ſubſidy to the Emperor, than by way of loan, as he conſidered the ſecurity given for repayment in the latter inſtance to be not of much value. If however the loan given did not exceed the amount of the propoſed ſubſidy, even in the worſt caſe the country could not be greatly a ſufferer. It had been noticed that his Imperial Maſteſty had not hitherto made good the ſtipulated inſtalments, and the intereſt due upon the former loan. The arrangements for that purpoſe with the court of Vienna had not been completely ſettled. But he put it to the Houſe, whether under all the circumſtances of the preſent year, a failure of this ſort could be conſidered as any proof of want of faith on the part of the Emperor? The honourable baronet ſeemed inclinable to quarrel with miniſters becauſe they had not adopted a reſolution to advance a much larger ſum for the ſervice of his Imperial Maſteſty, without advertiſing that the ſum which he ſuggeſted, might be more than either his Maſteſty wanted, or this country could conveniently ſpare. With reſpect to there
having

having been no account of the former advance in the Exchequer Bills, he would observe that these Exchequer Bills were only one mode of raising money for the year; but parliament might afterwards apply that money when raised any way it should think proper. The cash raised by the vote of credit last year was like all other money, not destined originally for any specific purpose; but in the ultimate appropriation of the whole at the end of the year, it would amount to the same thing. If the honourable gentleman was not satisfied with this explanation, he might bring the subject forward in any other way he should think proper at a more convenient time. All those who supported the amendment admitted that some advance was necessary, and it was even contended that an advance was necessary to a greater amount than was now proposed; he did not therefore apprehend any very serious objection to the address.

Mr. *Grey* rose to explain. He said that according to the manner in which publick money had been disposed of, all controul of Parliament on that subject was done away.

Mr. *Sheridan* wished to ask the minister two questions; the one a matter of fact, the other a matter of opinion. Whether the whole amount of the money advanced to the Emperor (excepting a small sum which was returned out of the last payment to his Imperial Majesty) is not due to this country? And while this sum is four millions and an half, and the Emperor is applying for another loan, and if that sum should be doubled, what security have we that any punctuality will be observed by the Emperor in his future payments?

Mr. *Pulteney's* motion, was negatived without a division.

Mr. *Sheridan* then rose, and after a short introduction proposed the following amendment at the end of the address. "Your Majesty's faithful Commons having thus manifested their determination to enable your Majesty to give such assistance to your Majesty's ally the Emperor, as may be indispensably necessary in the unfortunate event of an unfavourable issue to the present negotiations for peace, cannot omit this occasion of expressing their deep regret, that your Majesty's ministers should in recent instances have presumed to issue similar assistance to the Emperor without any previous application to parliament so to do: thereby acting, as your Majesty's gracious message appears in a great measure to admit, in defiance of the established practice and in violation of the constitutional privileges of this House."

Negatived without a division.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

The House then resolved itself into a committee of supply, when the following resolution was moved :

“ That a sum not exceeding 500,000*l.* be given to his Majesty to be applied to the service of the Emperor, to be issued at such times and in such a manner as his Majesty may see most proper.”

Mr. Fox called the attention of the committee to the resolution which was before it. He wished to learn whether they had any reason to know what would be the effect of what they were now called upon to do? Had they any means of knowing what the application would be of this money if parliament should grant it? How did they know that the money was not advanced already? The manner in which the ministers had brought the money affairs of the public before parliament, was so complicated that it was impossible the House of Commons could understand them clearly. When the minister gave an account of the vote of credit for the year 1796, he blended different services together, made a general fund for them, and afterwards placed the different sums applied to different services under their proper heads; by which means it was impossible for the House of Commons to see properly into the falsity of the minister's accounts. He would ask, under what pretence it was that the minister applied a vote of credit, given expressly to a prospective service for exigencies which might arise, to services which, to his knowledge, had arisen antecedent to that vote? He asked, why the minister deceived that House so shamelessly, why he made use of his Majesty's most sacred name, thereby imposing upon the House more speciously, to state what he knew would be a deception upon the House? The minister took a vote of credit avowedly for services which he said were to come, at the very time he knew these services had actually taken place. Why did he conceal that fact when he stated his accounts to the House? The extraordinaries were made up from different periods in what is called the budget; and afterwards followed up to the end of the year 1795. Why did the minister conceal from the House at that time the money that had been advanced to colonel Crauford, and then call it money to be applied to unforeseen services, as they might occur? Knowing, well knowing, at that time they had actually occurred, for the money was at that time paid for these very services. These expences had been incurred in the summer of 1795, and were actually

paid in December of the same year, before the minister opened his budget, and obtained that vote of credit. Why did he do this? To deceive the House of Commons with false accounts. The minister said that the vote of credit *de facto* was applied to other services, and that in the result the accounts were fair; but this was deceiving the House with a false account; for when the minister came forward with the accounts under their proper heads of service, it was found that the sums which were voted expressly for prospective services, had been actually applied to former services. So that under the sanction of a message from his Majesty the House of Commons voted a sum of money for prospective services in 1796, which were applied to services performed in 1795. Thus did the minister obtain money under false pretences. The consequence of such conduct might be dreadful to the country, as it entirely took away the discretion of the House of Commons by depriving it of the means of judging of the estimate of any services whatever, and made them give blindly to the minister sums of the public money without any knowledge of their application, until it was too late to judge of that application. If the minister was to be permitted to pursue such a plan as this, there would be an end entirely of the power of the House over the public purse; thus the minister had taken a course of obscurity, concealment and fraud, for it was nothing less than obscurity, concealment and fraud to ask for money for prospective unforeseen services, and afterwards to apply it to antecedent and known services. There was no point of view in which he could put this case stronger than that which he had done already, namely, to consider this as the case of a steward. If a gentleman's steward were to apply for money to defray future expences, and having obtained it, applied it to defray expences which he had formerly incurred, but had concealed from his employer, that would not be deemed a very faithful steward; and the transaction would be said at least to be very suspicious. That was at best the case of the minister. If the House should suffer this to pass without their marked reprobation, they would, in his opinion, abandon the very principle on which that House could be said to be worth any thing to the people of this country. He did not know how far this dereliction of duty was to be carried. He would aver, that if money was to be thus voted, and no measure taken to check the minister in his system of fraud and deception, not

member of that House, with all the talents he could

call

call into action, could be able to tell his constituents what was the amount of the expence with which he was loaded in the course of the votes which have already passed this session, because the whole was to be left to the discretion of the minister. If the House of Commons were so to conduct themselves, he did not see how they could be of more service to the people of this country than any other body of gentlemen of the same number, who met at any other place for their amusement.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that the observation of the right hon. gentleman did not at all apply to the question immediately before the committee. The propriety of voting a sum of 500,000*l.* for the service which had been stated. They referred merely to former accounts, which had been last year the subject of discussion. He had always held out that the money raised by Exchequer Bills was applicable to the purpose of the general supply of the year. He had last year stated precisely the same doctrine. He had then asserted the propriety of a retrospect use of the vote of credit under certain circumstances, as well as with a view to any unforeseen emergency which might occur. The accounts which had last year been produced, related merely to the different funds from which a sum had been raised, and did not distinguish the particular services to which it had been applied. So much had been raised by Exchequer Bills on the Land and Malt Tax, by Exchequer Bills on the distribution of annuities, and by Exchequer Bills on the vote of credit. So much had been paid to the Bank of England, and so much to the Paymaster general of the Forces. A sum had been expended to the amount of eight millions, but it was not stated how much had been applied for the establishment, and how much had been incurred for extraordinary. If it was asked, why the extraordinary were not made up to the 24th December, so as to distinguish those expences which were now made the ground of objection? The reason simply was, that the Bills had not been paid by the Paymaster General till the 31st December. It was true that the sum had been beforehand advanced by the Bank, and it was expressly stated in the House at the period of the former discussion, that there were certain arrears then due to the Bank. But till the bills had been paid by the Postmaster General, the sum did not come to be reckoned among the amount of the extraordinary. No account of the particular allotment of the sums had been given last year, because no such account was then called for. As to the argument

argument that it would be impossible, by the mode of proceeding that had been adopted in producing the accounts, to know the true state of the finances of the country, it was undoubtedly impossible, amidst a number of complicated objects of expenditure, to ascertain precisely at one period all the details. But, he trusted, that it would appear that last year there had been no attempt at concealment, and that no information which had been required had been withheld so far as it could at the time be properly produced.

Mr. Grey said, that he wished to use the utmost brevity on the present occasion, as he was desirous as much as possible to keep the right honourable gentleman to one point, and to prevent him from evading any precise explanation by the multiplication of words. He desired to ask, whether from the whole of the statement he had just made, any honest and intelligent man could derive the means of understanding the state of the accounts, as laid upon the table? From the mode in which the right honourable gentleman talked of using the vote of credit, no account could be intelligible. When he (Mr. Grey) called last year for accounts, he wished to ascertain not only how much had been expended, but how much had been applied to each particular service. Such was the object of his motions at that time. The right honourable gentleman now said, that so much was raised by Exchequer Bills on one fund, and so much on another. What had this to do with the information which he had required as to the application of the different sums. When he found from the accounts, that eight millions had been paid to the Paymaster-General of the forces, would not any plain man understand that this sum had been incurred for the service of the army. Could he possibly conceive that, under this description, was comprehended the amount of a subsidy to the Prince of Conde? If such a mode of applying the public money, and afterwards stating the accounts, was sanctioned by the House, the act of appropriation would be merely waste paper, and the distribution paper good for nothing; there would be an end of all that controul which parliament affected to possess over the purse of the nation, and the disposal of the revenue would, in future, be entirely left at the discretion of the ministers. When, under the description of money paid to the Paymaster-General, they found that there was a sum of 341,000*l.* remitted to the Prince of Conde, and another sum of 1,400,000*l.* expended for a different purpose, what confidence

dence could they have in the accounts laid upon the table, and what security against the improper application of public money?

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* in reply to Mr. Grey, stated that the account of general services, which was last year laid upon the table, gave as much information as it purported. The honourable gentleman must have known that the mode of issuing money for the service of foreign troops was by bills drawn upon the Paymaster-General, and that all bills of exchange were also drawn in the same way. The account of last year indeed gave no items with respect to the application of the expence, and no items had then been demanded. If the honourable gentleman at that time wished to ascertain the particulars, he ought to have brought forward a motion for that purpose.

Mr. Grey said, that he must object to an inference so often resorted to by the honourable gentleman, that a member of that House was not entitled to complain of any instance of public abuse, because he had omitted to bring it forward on a former occasion; with respect to himself, if he had had the least notion that under the article of army expenditure was included a large subsidy to a foreign prince, he would not have failed in the first moment to remonstrate against so gross an application of public money. But though he daily saw the right honourable gentleman in the habit of violating acts of parliament, and making continual inroads on the constitution, he did not conceive him to have been guilty of a conduct so expressly in the teeth of existing acts of parliament, and so entirely subversive of every constitutional principle. It was on this ground only that he had omitted to touch on the particular topic now in question, at the period of last year when he had exerted his best endeavours to get to the bottom of that foul and monstrous system which had been adopted by ministers in the expenditure of the public money.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* was sorry that the honourable gentleman made it requisite not only for him to use a great number of words, but to use the same words oftener than once. He did not complain that the honourable gentleman argued against a measure now, which he had let pass without animadversion before. All he said was this, that the honourable gentleman, last session, got all the information which he asked for, and that he gave a proof that he was satisfied with the degree of information which he received by not objecting to the accounts as deficient or unsatisfactory

satisfactory in any respect. But now that he had got some more particular information, than what he was then in possession of, in the plenitude of his politeness, his candour, and his justice, he termed that a concealment on the part of ministers, which was neither more nor less than an account under a general head which was now presented in a more detailed point of view.

Mr. Fox was of opinion, that the transaction alluded to by his honourable friend, was not only a concealment but a fraudulent concealment, and he appealed to the House, whether they could give any other colour to the transaction? He asked if it was to be expected, if any person ever imagined, that the account of the extraordinaries of the army contained a loan or subsidy to a foreign Prince? What was the nature of a vote of credit? It was completely and directly prospective, and could never communicate to him any authority to apply the sums voted to discharge of arrears previously incurred. In order to be convinced that it was solely its object, he referred them to the words of the act. There they would find its object to be to provide not for such expences as shall have arisen, but for such expences as may arise. He referred also to the language which the honourable gentleman himself had held in opening the budget for 1796. He then calculated the extraordinaries for the ensuing year lower than they were last year, and he assigned this reason. The extraordinaries for the year 1795 he alledged had been high, because we had an army to maintain upon the continent, an expence from which we should be freed in the present year. He never mentioned, however, his intention of sending half a million to the Prince of Conde's army, though he had determined upon the measure, and though he well knew that this would make the extraordinaries of the army this year full as high as they were last year. But there the honourable gentleman thought proper to defend himself by referring to the dates at which the Bills were paid. This, however, was a most silly and superficial apology, for every one saw, that, though the Bills were not paid till December, they were all drawn before, some of them as early even as the month of June. He must have known, at the opening of the budget of this expence, and yet he concealed it, and for what reason? To deceive and delude the country, and to shew the House that the public money was at his, and not at their disposal. After this concealment, he afterwards brought down a message from the King, applying for a vote of credit, not to discharge

charge past arrears, but to provide for future and unforeseen services. The application was evidently wholly prospective : there seemed to be nothing retrospective, either in the views of the honourable gentleman, or in the intention of the House of Commons. His conduct then appeared to be dictated by no other motive than that of deceiving, deluding, and cheating parliament into an assent of a measure about which he was either afraid to consult them, or respecting which he would not condescend to acknowledge them. He again put it to the committee, whether they would tolerate such conduct in a steward, an allusion which in his opinion was extremely applicable to the relation in which the honourable gentleman stood to the House of Commons. He put it to gentlemen not only whether they could form a precise idea of the state of the public finances, while such conduct was allowed to pass without reprehension, but whether they could form any estimate, or even venture to guess at the expences of the country at all. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer came forward, pretending to calculate the public expence for the ensuing year, was it to be supposed that in this calculation he had past extraordinaries in his eye. In the present instance, however, knowing what the actual expences of the country were, he concealed them from the House of Commons, wishing to keep them ignorant, either of the real expences of the war, or of the plan of granting subsidies which he adopted. Mr. Fox observed, that the honourable gentleman was smiling : as much as to say, "What ! would I not have dared to communicate my intentions to the last parliament ? what is there which I would not have dared to communicate to them ?" But, said Mr. Fox, after they had done so much for him, perhaps the honourable gentleman did not choose to put them on hard service on the session preceding the dissolution. He again insisted, that it was totally impossible for any man unconnected with the Treasury to form a just opinion of the finances of the country, while the minister was permitted thus to disclose or conceal whatever expences he might think proper. How was it possible for the committee to know, that even on this very day there was not a million sent to the Emperor beyond the sum now applied for ? If he had used strong language, it was, in his opinion, justified by facts ; and therefore he would not retract it. He sat down, desiring that the Vote of Credit Act for last year might be read.

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The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that he should not again enter upon the topics which he had gone over twice before; he could not, however, permit the misrepresentation of the honourable gentleman to pass unnoticed, that 500,000*l.* had been issued in December.

Mr. *Fox* interrogated Mr. Pitt, and denied that he had ever said 500,000*l.* was issued in December: he had said that expences to that amount were incurred previous to December.

Mr. *Grey* shortly explained a former argument.

Mr. *Bouverie* reprehended the conduct of ministers. He thought nothing they had done could be included in a vote of credit which was prospective. He said he wished to forward, as much as any man the negotiations, but he thought money should not be sent out of the kingdom without the knowledge of Parliament. He had taken a deal of pains in examining precedents, but he had found none that properly applied.

Mr. *Sheridan* observed, that the *Chancellor of the Exchequer* had the prettiest faculty of putting his words together of any man he ever knew; he also had the discretion to know when to hold his tongue. The honourable gentleman had replied twice to the charge of his honourable friend, but he excused himself from returning to the charge a third time, after having spent all his ammunition. In fact, he had exhausted all his argument, and had not another word to say. Mr. *Sheridan* thought the House was not at all enabled to judge of the subject. He thought they had a right to know how the engagements with respect to the last loan had been fulfilled; but the minister had not deigned to give him any answer on that point. However, there were gentlemen in the House, from whom he trusted he should receive some information. Mr. *Sheridan* offered a variety of observations respecting the transaction relative to the loans by this country to the Emperor; and he conceived ministers had been guilty of very great neglect in not being enabled to throw a little more light on the subject than they had done. It was his opinion, that we ought to suspend our consent to any new loan, until they received satisfaction respecting the Emperor's having fulfilled the articles of the former one. He was not to be told in pompous language of the faith of the Emperor, and the valour of the Archduke; he thought transactions respecting loans were rather to be referred to the convenience of the merchants, than to the valour of the Emperor. If we trusted the Emperor on such grounds, the same argument

guments might be afterwards urged, why he should not pay us again when he was called on. Mr. Sheridan then moved, that we should lend the Emperor the sum of five hundred thousand pounds, whenever the engagements respecting the former loan should be fulfilled, or satisfactory reasons given for their failure.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* acknowledged the fairness of the honourable gentleman's deduction. He stated explicitly, that the interest on the loan had been paid at the time stipulated, and whether that interest was deducted out of any part of the loan, or transmitted in a more circuitous manner from Vienna to London, was a matter of no consequence. He vindicated the Lords of the Treasury as to their conduct in the business, observing, that the answer to be made in consequence of a request from that House was to be given by them, not on personal or individual knowledge, but from official information received. And with regard to the mode of procuring that information for the House, Mr. Pitt said he had himself given it to the honourable gentleman, previous to his framing a charge against him. He observed, that the treasury, as such, could no otherwise interfere in enquiring into the manner of the Emperor's fulfilling his engagement but by applying to the Emperor's agents for information. As to the guarantee, he acknowledged he was bound to have more precise information on that subject: and he took upon him to say, that the parliament had not guaranteed the payment of the sinking fund: however much the publick or individuals would have a right to complain, if there was any failure on the part of the Emperor. The Chancellor then proposed to correct Mr. Sheridan's statement, that two years and a half had elapsed since the Emperor had begun to pay any part of the sinking fund, observing, that the engagement was not made till May 1795, nor could the sinking fund take place after that, till the whole sum was advanced upon the loan, so that the period of two years and a half was in fact little more than one year; and whoever calmly and candidly reflected on all the continental transactions of the Emperor during this period, would, Mr. Pitt asserted, be hardy indeed to infer, that the Emperor had no design to execute his agreement; and he would cheerfully submit to the judgment of the House, whether that was sufficient ground to oppose the measure proposed.

Mr. Sheridan contended, that the guarantee for the payment of the interest of the loan, and the sinking fund for

the redemption of the principal, stood upon the same ground, and that the creditors of the Emperor in each case look to the publick as their guarantee. He doubted, whether, without advancing fresh sums to the Emperor, he could have paid the interest of the former sums borrowed, and thought this held out but poor encouragement to expect the repayment of the principal sums advanced. He wished to know also, whether the *actions* of the Emperor's Austrian dominions were deposited in the Bank of England as a security? Whether the 5000*l.* monthly, or 60,000*l.* annually, had been paid according to the treaty, and had been applied towards the buying up of the bonds at the market price, and for the purpose of a sinking fund for the redemption of the capital of the loan. In short, Mr. Sheridan insisted that there was a failure on the Emperor's side of every part of the treaty, and that the 500,000*l.* now proposed to be advanced, was to enable him to fulfill his former engagement with the British public.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, in reply, said, what he had stated was, not that the publick had no interest in the fulfilment of this treaty, but only that they were not to be considered as guarantees to individuals. Were there any just grounds for apprehending any failure on the part of the Emperor, he allowed that it might be very proper for the investigation and interference of parliament; but that was not the question then before the committee.

Mr. *Bouverie* wished to know whether the 500,000*l.* now moved for, had been actually remitted to the Emperor?

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* replied, that the object of the measure now proposed was, to take the authority of parliament for sums to be remitted, and not to cover any former remittances.

Mr. *Sheridan* wished to know whether ministers considered themselves authorized to take the Prince of Conde's army into British pay, and continue such payment without the previous consent and approbation of parliament? This measure, he observed, was virtually the same as encreasing the loan to the Emperor.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said that was a question totally irrelevant to the subject before the committee.

Mr. *Fox* wished to know whether ministers thought themselves at liberty from the vote of credit to encrease the sum of 950,000*l.* which they had actually remitted to the Emperor, to the sum of 1,200,000*l.* exclusive of the additional sum proposed of 500,000*l.*

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The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* replied in the affirmative, Mr. Fox asked whether any member of the committee saw any reason why the House could not have voted for the large sums issued to the Emperor since the commencement of Parliament, in the same manner as the 500,000*l.* now proposed? To this, no answer was given.

The question on Mr. Sheridan's amendment was then put and negatived, and the original resolution before the committee was carried in the affirmative, the report of which was ordered to be received the next day.

The House being resumed,

The amended Militia and Cavalry Bills were each read a first and second time, and ordered to be committed the next day.

The Bills will be printed when the blanks are filled up in the committee, and discussed on the reports on Thursday.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* announced a material alteration in the new Cavalry Bill, which provides, that as an encouragement to persons enrolling themselves as volunteers, three fourths in volunteers shall be held equal to the whole three-fourths of the number proposed to be ballotted. and that any individual who shall come forward as a volunteer, shall have it in his power to exempt any particular class shall be at the expence of supporting the horse so supplied.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the County Quota Bill.

Leave was given, and the Bill was brought in and read a first time.

The Navy Bills was read a second time.

The Scotch Distillery Bill passed through a committee.

MUTINY BILL.

The *Secretary at War* presented the Mutiny Bill, which was read a first time.

General *de Lancey* wished to know, whether by this Bill a foldier had a right of appeal granted from a regimental to a general court martial?

The *Secretary at War* said, that was a matter which would be more proper for discussion in a future stage of the Bill.

The committee on the India accounts and the other orders of the day were adjourned till the next day.

On the report of the excise Duty Bill being brought up,

Mr. *Rose* moved an amendment, that, instead of two

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shillings,

shillings, tea at two shillings and sixpence per pound shall be exempted from the new duty, which was agreed to.

On the motion that the customs duty Bill be engrossed, Mr. Sewell and Mr. Nichol offered a few observations on the additional duties on coffee and sugar. They represented them as discouraging to the industry of the colonies, and as ultimately injurious to the revenue? and Mr. Sewell was of opinion, that the duties on East India sugar should be in exact proportion to those on the British plantation sugar.

After a few words in reply from Mr. Rose, the House adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, Dec. 20.

Petitions were read from the prisoners confined for debt in different gaols in the kingdom, stating the hardships of their condition, and applying to their Lordships mercy for relief, &c. Ordered to be laid upon their Lordships' Table.

Lord *Grenville* then moved the order of the day, which was for taking his Majesty's Message into consideration.

The message being read,

Lord *Grenville* rose to move an address to his Majesty in answer to his most gracious message. It would, his Lordship said, be unnecessary for him to enter at large into the subject before the House. Their Lordships were doubtless sufficiently impressed with its importance. It was a call upon their Lordships to enable his Majesty to prosecute the war with vigour, in alliance with his Imperial Majesty, should another campaign be rendered unavoidable. It had been the best and happiest policy of this country, in its best and happiest times, to have a strong Continental alliance, capable of sending large armies into the field, while it contended with France. The wisdom and soundness of this policy had perhaps never been more strongly exemplified than during the present war, nor during the present war than during the existing campaign, in which the splendid and important successes of the armies of his Imperial Majesty had been in a great measure attributable to the pecuniary aids, which had from time to time been furnished to that Prince from this country. In case it should unfortunately happen that the present negotiations should be interrupted, or should not lead to a secure and honourable peace, the

the most consequential advantages were to be hoped and expected from having made ample provision, not only that we ourselves, but our allies also, should be prepared at an early period of the next campaign to prosecute the war with the utmost possible vigour and effect. To enable the Executive Government to continue to grant assistance to our ally, the Emperor, was the whole and sole object of the present message. Not being able, therefore, to foresee or anticipate any objections which could be made to it, he would forbear to trespass on their Lordships' time, any further than to move an Address of Thanks to his Majesty for his most gracious communication.

The question being put by the *Lord Chancellor*,

The *Duke of Bedford* said, that so long as we should have the misfortune to be involved in the present ruinous war, he did admit there might be cases in which it was possible that policy might require aid to be given from this country to the Emperor, in the event of another campaign being necessary; he should therefore say nothing against the present address. He however begged to be understood explicitly in the vote which he was about to give, that he did not assent to the conduct of ministers in having granted, or in granting any pecuniary aid to the Emperor, or any foreign Prince or power, either by subsidy, by loan, or any other means, without the consent of Parliament; he gave his assent to the measure upon the probability of its being necessary in the event of the negotiation between this country and France being unsuccessful, which however he hoped would not be so. He repeated, it was with that qualification that he assented to the address.

The question being again put,

The *Duke of Bedford* said there was a word in the address which perhaps he ought to have taken notice of before. He meant the word *continuing* the aid to the Emperor. This seemed to convey an idea of the approbation of the House, with regard to the measures of the minister in giving aid to the Emperor without the consent of Parliament. If so, he could not, under that construction, agree to the Address.

Lord Grenville said, that he knew not how to answer an opinion so stated. The word alluded to by the noble Duke was a word which was introduced into the address as the nature of the case required, it was to be taken according to its real import, and he saw nothing in its import which called for any particular explanation. With regard to ministers' sending money to an ally without the knowledge of Parliament,

liament, he could easily see that many cases might arise in which it would be highly commendable and meritorious in ministers so to do, but that wherever it could be done consistently with the publick safety, parliament ought to be apprized, and their consent obtained previously.

The *Duke of Bedford* said, after the explanation of the Secretary of State upon the subject of remitting money to a foreign power without the knowledge of Parliament, a continuance of which the noble Lord did not disavow, he must enter his protest against an explanation so unsatisfactory to his mind.

The motion was then put, and the address agreed to *ne mine dissentiente*.

The Duke then rose and gave notice that early after the holidays, he should have a proposition to bring forward upon that subject, and which would have for its object the disapprobation of their Lordships upon such proceedings. He gave notice for two reasons: First, that in the interim, any other Peer of Parliament might take the subject up if he should think fit, in which case he should be ready to assign it to such Peer; secondly, that ministers should have due time, (for time they seemed to want), to make a more cool and deliberate view of their conduct, to prepare for their defence, and to enable them, not to acquit themselves but to palliate (for they could but palliate) their conduct in the proceeding to which he alluded; and also to afford to those noble Lords who had repeatedly asserted, that they defended ministers for the preservation of the constitution only, but they would abandon them when they found they violated that constitution, time to consider whether they wished to appear to have been in earnest in their professions, and if so, whether they could consistently continue any further to support the present ministers.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, *December 20.*

The sheriffs of London presented a petition from the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Corporation of the City of London, against the Wet Dock Bill, which was ordered to lie on the table.

Colonel *Gascoigne* brought up a Bill to prevent the desertion of seamen from merchant ships trading to the West Indies and the colonies, which was read a first time.

The

The Bill for enabling certain issues of money to be made for the assistance of the merchants of Grenada was read a second time, and committed for the next day.

The Bill for the speedier payment of navy, victualling, and Exchequer Bills, was read a second time, and ordered to be committed for the next day.

The Bill for the better levying the Stamp Duty on bonds, leases, &c. was committed; the report brought up, and ordered to be received the next day.

The report of the resolution for the militia pay, and cloathing was brought up from the committee of ways and means, agreed to, and a Bill ordered to be brought in.

AUSTRIAN LOAN.

Mr. *Nicholls* said, that previous to the report of the committee of supply of the preceding day, being taken into consideration, he thought that the House ought to call upon the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Bank, to attend and inform the House, what were the reasons that induced them to object to the measure of an Austrian loan; and to say, whether these reasons had ceased to exist: In the course of the conversation the preceding day, it had come out that two of the principal reasons were the high price of bullion and the rate of exchange, and that all the directors had concurred in the opposition. It was a fact that 50 guineas on 1000 could be made by melting the coin, and while this was the case it was impossible that the quantity of specie could be kept up by coining. There was certainly good reason to be cautious before such a measure as that of sending so much money out of the country was adopted and it was highly becoming the dignity of the House to enquire into the subject, and to know whether we still were in the situation that would render it improper to diminish the quantity of coin in circulation. This was but the beginning of a system, and much larger sums might be proposed. A distinguished character (Mr. Burke) who was known to be in some measure the political director of some gentlemen upon the ministerial bench, had recommended the prosecution of the war against France at those places where she was vulnerable, and that was in the centre. He did not know if the minister was wholly of this opinion, but he had heard rumours of new subsidies to Russia, and if this idea was to be acted upon, more sums would be drained out of the country. He had been one of those who never thought the war necessary, and he did not altogether agree with some about the value of the
objects

objects for which it was to be continued. He did not conceive it as of such vast consequence to reconquer the Low Countries for the Emperor, nor was the object of such importance as to justify or compensate for our sending money abroad to the danger of overthrowing the great springs of our prosperity. The state of Europe was changed since the peace of Utrecht, when that country was gained for the Emperor, and now were it restored to him, it would have to be defended by the money of Great Britain, should France ever attempt to regain it. He was of opinion, that a certain quantity of coin was necessary, and that it was not enough that there should be coin to circulate the paper. There was at present a very great scarcity of coin. The silver coin especially was very scarce. He did not know the cause from which the latter arose, whether it was from the number of fencible corps, which made a greater demand for this article, but the fact was certain. He could not think of sending more money to the Emperor, when the money he had last received cost this country 100 per cent. for the profit which individuals had made on the depreciation of government paper, which had arisen from the quantity of it in the market issued for the purpose of enabling ministers to send him supplies. It would therefore be highly necessary for the House to consider what would be the consequences of sending more money out of the kingdom; great embarrassment from the scarcity of money had been felt by tradesmen in the metropolis and elsewhere, which if the cause were increased, would likewise reach the higher ranks; he should therefore move, That the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Bank be required to attend at the bar on that day; when the report of the committee of supply is to be taken into consideration.

Mr. *Grey* seconded the motion, and the question being put, it was negatived without a division.

The report of the committee of supply being brought up,

RESULT OF THE CAMPAIGN.

General *Tarleton* rose, and compared the situation of the Austrians at the different periods when they had received the assistance of this country, and he concluded that the Austrians in reality had in point of territory lost very considerably since that period. Since the beginning of the campaign, notwithstanding their recent disasters upon the Rhine, the French had got possession of three strong places, which enabled them to penetrate when a convenient opportunity presented, into the German territories. These were Hunin-
guen,

guen, Kehl, and Neuwied. In Italy the French had gained every thing except Mantua, and upon a general survey of the campaign, it would appear that the Austrians had only regained a part of what they had lost, notwithstanding the great achievements of the Archduke Charles, the brilliancy of which all must acknowledge. He thought the measure of sending money to the Emperor extremely dangerous, and could tend to nothing but the destruction of the country. After all the pompous accounts the right honourable gentleman had given of the successes of the Emperor, the Austrians were only in the situation of the Dutchman, who congratulated himself when he broke his leg, that it was not his neck.

MONEY TO BE ADVANCED TO THE EMPEROR.

The report being read, of the resolution, to enable his Majesty to supply the Emperor with a sum not exceeding 500,000*l*.

The report was then read a first and second time.

Mr. Grey said it was his wish the amendment proposed the preceding day by his honourable friend (Mr. Sheridan) to the resolution of the committee should appear on the journals of the House, he should then move an amendment which would go to the same end. It appeared from the accounts laid upon the table that the Emperor had not complied with the conditions of the loan, either with respect to the annual remittances or to the provision for the sinking fund. There was not, as the right honourable gentleman had observed, an arrear of one year only, for the payments were to have commenced on the 1st of May 1794. But with the exception of 11,060*l*. stock, which had been purchased with one month's remittance, no payments whatever had taken place. This was a material consideration both to the public and to individuals before any new advances were agreed to be made. He had already stated the difference of price between the Imperial 3 per cents. and the consolidated 3 per cents. and he found on enquiry, that he was warranted in that statement. As the public were the guarantees of the loan, the risk was certainly greater in proportion as the conditions on which it was granted, were not fulfilled. He was not debating the policy of the measure, but wished to view the transaction as it had been carried on. The right honourable gentleman had said, that in the present sum of 500,000*l*. nothing was included for the Prince of Conde. Yet it could not be denied, that remittances had been made for the army under the command of that Prince in December and Spring last for services in 1795, Bills had been drawn even previous to December 1795, and they were conti-

nued in February and March since. But as that corps had been acting constantly from that time, he wished to know from the right honourable gentleman, whether money was not to be remitted for these services, and whether it was his intention to come to the House for a new supply? Mr. Grey then moved as an amendment to the resolution of the committee of supply, after the words expressing their concurrence to grant the supply " whenever it shall appear, that the engagements of the last loan have been fulfilled, or that satisfactory reasons have been given for the failure of the same."

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said as the subject had been fully discussed in the committee the preceding night, he should say nothing on the merits of the amendment. But with respect to the question put to him by the honourable gentleman, on the sums which it might be found necessary to issue to the Prince of Conde's corps, though he could not take upon him precisely to state what these sums might amount to, yet he believed the farther sums which would be yet drawn for, would be about 80,000*l.* or probably 100,000*l.* to be included in the army extraordinaries. This question might however be discussed after the recess. He had no difficulty in saying, that the honourable gentleman's statements were completely erroneous, as it was evident, that the sums paid were not all incurred in 1795. Above 200,000*l.* were drawn for and paid by Colonel Crawford in 1796. He had anxiously endeavoured to ascertain the exact facts, and he had found his own statements correct, without trusting to his general recollection. With respect to the question of collateral securities, he had already suggested, that a motion might be brought forward on that head. It was, however, necessary for him to repeat, that the House would on enquiry, be satisfied, that the conditions had been exactly complied with.

Mr. Fox contended that 308,000*l.* had been paid anterior on the 1st of October 1795. He had carefully looked at the papers on the table, and found himself justified in making that statement. [Mr. Fox was referred to the papers.] He then admitted, that he had overlooked several dates, and that only 250,000*l.* had been paid before the term to which he alluded. He therefore called on the right honourable gentleman to declare whether the House was to hear of any other sums sent to the Prince of Conde.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said it was a matter of some satisfaction to find that the right honourable gentleman
admitted

admitted he had been guilty of an erroneous statement. It was to be considered certainly as a mere error, yet he hoped it would be a lesson to gentlemen that they should be very cautious in charging others with fraud, since they were from their own concessions guilty of errors themselves, and that on papers on which they founded their charges and which they considered as authentic documents.

Mr. *Fox* replied that he was ready to give the right honourable gentleman the full benefit of the misstatement of which he had been so violently charged, and which he himself had previously admitted.

Mr. *Grey* explained, and Mr. *Fox* said a few words.

The amendment was then negatived, and the resolution of the committee agreed to.

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

Mr. Secretary *Dundas* said, that before he entered into the consideration of the papers which were laid on the table of the House, respecting the affairs of India, he thought it necessary to call the attention of gentlemen to a matter of considerable importance. The navigation laws, as they existed in consequence of the acts of Charles and William, attached on the countries subject to, and in possession of Great Britain, They affected those dominions acquired by conquest, and were in force with regard to St. Domingo, Martinique, and other Islands. In mentioning this, he wished it to be understood, that it was his intention to make an exception of the Cape of Good Hope, as to the operation of the navigation laws. He wished that valuable settlement should be held and enjoyed in its full value, without injuring the interest of every other country connected with us. When it was held by the Dutch, it could only be considered as a strict monopoly. All other nations who called there in the course of their traffic, were obliged to submit to a number of preemptions and inconveniences, he would not say, hardships. The Dutch were alone exempted from them. Provisions, and many other wants, were set up at a price greatly superior to what ought to have been done, according to a fair and equitable regulation; and those whose necessities, required a supply of such articles, were compelled to submit to the demands which were made on them. He should therefore propose, that his majesty in council might be enabled to regulate the trade to and from the Cape of Good Hope, in such a manner as that it should not be subject to the operation of the navigation laws. In stating this

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proposition,

proposition, he declared that it was not the intention of his Majesty to prevent other nations from victualling at the Cape, or supplying themselves with such necessaries as the settlement could afford; it was not his intention to hold it in colonial law, nor debar the subjects of other countries from the advantages they might enjoy there; it was not his intention to prevent other nations from carrying goods there; nor was it his desire to prohibit directly or indirectly the inhabitants from bating their produce. He desired that the acts of Charles II. and William, for the encouragement of shipping, should be read *pro forma*. Mr. Dundas then moved, "that this House do immediately resolve itself into a committee of the whole House, to consider of the trade and commerce of this country to and from the Cape of Good Hope."

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* seconded the motion.

Sir *Francis Baring* declared he was sorry to hear the business of the India budget prefaced in the manner adopted by the right honourable gentleman. He should, for his part, be glad to hear of something more palatable, and he would therefore oppose going into the committee. The Cape of Good Hope had been so long in the possession of the Dutch, that gentlemen were not perhaps fully prepared to consider the subject in all its relations. The Cape certainly appeared to him in a very different light from what it did to the right honourable gentleman, as a valuable acquisition. He considered it as a heavy burthen to the publick, and should pronounce it an object of no moment in the negociation then carrying on. The Cape was surrounded by a desert 30 miles in extent, and—

Sir *Francis Baring* was informed by the speaker that he was out of order, as he was discussing a question which was not before the House.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* spoke to order. He said, that his right honourable friend had not introduced his motion as previous to the India budget, or as a preface to that business. It had been merely brought forward in a positive view, not as preparatory to the affairs of India. The question before the House was not whether the Cape of Good Hope was an important possession or not, whether we should exclude other nations from it, or permit them to have recourse to it, whether it was worth being the object of negociation or not, but, whether, while we held it, it should be subject to the operation of the navigation laws. The honourable baronet had made no political or commercial objection to the motion;

motion; but it was rather singular, that notwithstanding he maintained the Cape was of no value to us, that he should object to other nations being permitted to go there. He should therefore submit to the honourable baronet, whether the statements he had thought proper to make, were fit objections to the House immediately going into a committee.

Sir *Francis Baring* explained, and admitted that he had been somewhat premature in his opposition to the motion, but insisted that the value of the Cape had always been over-rated.

Mr. *Dundas's* motion was agreed to, and the House resolved itself into the committee.

Lord *Hawkebury* in the chair.

Mr. *Dundas* said, that having stated the nature of what was submitted to the consideration of the committee, he should avoid entering into the discussion suggested by the honourable baronet. All that he should say was, that he hoped as long as his Majesty should hold the Cape, which he sincerely trusted would be for ever, it would be held in such a manner as not to debar other nations from any benefits which they might derive from frequenting it. He should therefore move, "that it is the opinion of this committee, that the chairman do move the House for leave to bring in a Bill to enable his Majesty in council to regulate for a limited time the trade and commerce to and from the Cape of Good Hope, so as to be without the intent and meaning of the navigation laws."

Mr. *Harrison* thought the measure proposed by the right honourable gentleman was only a prelude to establish a variety of additional expences and emoluments. It would tend to the superfluous appointment of staff and other officers. It appeared more advantageous to him if the Cape were in the hands of a weak power, than in the possession of this country. He was of opinion, that it would raise the jealousy of other powers, and prove a bar to the success of the present negotiation, while it could not fail at the same time to establish a monopoly of trade.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* observed, that the reasons urged by the honourable gentleman appeared somewhat inconsistent. He first talked of the additional expence which it was necessary to incur for the purpose of keeping the Cape, and yet he was desirous of seeing it in the hands of a weak power, which certainly could not be equally competent with this country to bear that expence. The honourable gentleman next argued that the measure would establish a monopoly,
and

and yet the very object of the measure was a relaxation of the navigation laws, which in every point of view defeated the end of monopoly. The honourable gentleman then proceeded to lay some stress on the probability of the Cape proving a bar to negotiation, when it was evident that the possession of so valuable a settlement could alone tend to accelerate the conclusion of negotiation. Thus on the separate grounds of expence, monopoly, and policy, the honourable gentleman had urged nothing but what could be refuted by his own principles.

After a few words in explanation from Mr. *Harrison* the resolution was carried. The House was resumed, and a Bill ordered to be brought in.

INDIA BUDGET.

The order of the day being moved to resolve into a committee of the whole house, to take into consideration the papers presented from the India House, &c. Mr. Douglas in the chair.

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* rose and said, that the accounts which he was about to state to the committee, would not take up a considerable portion of their time, because they were comprised in a narrower compass than upon former occasions. The reason of this was, that some years ago it had not been the practice of the presidencies abroad to prepare their estimates within any degree of regularity or accuracy, but the presidencies remitted them home as a mere matter of custom, in the usual form, without the least attention or regard to any sort of precision. In that situation he found them when he first undertook the task of stating them to the house; but by prudent and necessary regulations which he had established, he had now finally brought them into such a state, that for the period of the last two or three years he believed they had been tolerably accurate. From the situation, therefore, that the accounts were now reduced to, he trusted he should not have many points on which it would be necessary for the committee to call for minute explanation. The papers were upon the table for their reference, and wherever any difficulty should arise, he would be ready to satisfy them. For these reasons, he should not enter into any minute details, but by referring gentlemen to the figures in the papers on the table, leave the result only for himself to give any explanatory detail, when such might be required. He proposed therefore, without further preface, to proceed immediately to that explanation

nation which the nature of his duty appeared to demand.—Not to interrupt the detail, however, which he was going into, it seemed necessary for him previously to state to the committee, that for the sake of elucidation, he first meant to bring forward the results of the accounts applicable to each settlement, separately; and then he meant to bring forward the accounts of all the settlements combined; afterwards to bring forward the separate accounts of the East-India Company at home; and, lastly, to enumerate them all, combining both the foreign and domestic, in order to deduce his general result. By these means gentlemen would have an opportunity of seeing, whether the assertions which he formerly made respecting the flourishing state of the company's finances were realized—whether the flattering expectations which he raised were gratified by practice and experience; and whether, upon the conviction of the accuracy of his statements, they ought not to be induced to repose their confidence in time to come. He proceeded to enter into the necessary details, observing that he had divided his statements into three different classes. The first class, according to his usual practice, consisted of the average statements of the three last years, with a view of enabling the committee to judge of the past. The other account was to lay before the committee a comparison of the estimates, and actual amounts of the charges and revenues of the last year; and the third class contained the account of what expenses or disbursements might arise in a future year.

REVENUES.

[BENGAL, CURRENT RUPEE AT 2S.]

	<i>Current Rupees</i>	<i>£. Sterling.</i>
No. 1. Average Revenue, 1792-3, to 1794-5	5,77,42,130	5,774,213
Which was more than the average stated last year	34,88,959	348,895
No. 3. Estimate for 1794-5, was	5,58,06,068	5,500,607
Actual Amount	5,93,79,314	5,937,931
Being more than estimated	35,73,246	357,324

Gentlemen would be pleased to recollect, that these accounts came over in the course of the spring, and if they desired to have an accurate account of the whole revenues to the latest period of the year to which these accounts belonged, he must produce another another statement in the course of next spring, by which time he hoped to have them transmitted.

CHARGES.

CHARGES.

	Current Rupees.	Sterling.
No. 3. Charges for 1794-5 were estimated at	3,27,86,345	3,278,635
Actual amount in the year	3,47,73,960	3,477,396
Being more than estimated	19,87,615	198,761
Deducting the excess of Charge from excess of Revenue, the actual amount of net Revenues more than estimated, was	15,85,631	158,653
And the net Revenue of this year was	2,46,05,354	2,460,535

ESTIMATES 1795-6

No. 1. The Revenues were estimated to amount to	5,63,12,780	5,631,278
No. 2. The Charges to	3,50,88,226	3,508,823
Estimated net Revenue	2,12,24,554	2,122,455
No. 3. By this Number, Gentlemen would see that the Revenues estimated for 1795-6 were less than the actual amount of the preceding year by	30,66,534	306,653
And the Charges estimated for 1795-6 more than the preceding year, by	3,14,266	31,427
While the estimated net Revenue was less than the preceding year by	33,80,800	338,080

Gentlemen would perceive, by examining these papers, that notwithstanding there might be an excess of revenue on the Bengal station in 1795-6, which from the excess of 1794-5, there was some reason to hope, yet in forming the future estimate, especial care had been taken to estimate the revenues at less than the actual amount of the preceding year; while, upon the other hand, the estimates of charges were something larger than the former year, which did, however, exceed the estimate upon them.

MADRAS.

He came to the Madras station; and with respect to that he trusted, gentlemen would see it was impossible to state any average from 1792-3, to 1794-5, on account of two years subsidies from the Rajah of Travancore and the Rajah of Cochin, which had now fallen by transfer to the settlement of Bombay. During those two years also, large sums of money were paid, according to treaty, by Tippoo Sultan to the treasury of Madras, which would make some variation in the general accounts. He stated this, in order to shew the progressive accuracy which he had established more distinctly; for after striking out these contingent items, the average of the three preceding years in the other separate sums was exceeded.

ceeded by 185,006l. If gentlemen would take the trouble, therefore, to compare the statements, they would find an improvement had been made in the revenues of Madras, so that an excess of 185,006l. over the average of the three former years was produced, without comprehending the contingencies which had swelled the amount beyond the ordinary estimates.

	<i>Pagodas.</i>	<i>£. Sterling.</i>
The Revenues 1794-5 were estimated at	46,38,293	1,855,317
No. 6. Actual amount in that year was	44,39,455	1,775,782
Revenues less than estimated	1,98,838	79,535

CHARGES.

No. 6. Charges 1794-5 estimated at	44,55,617	1,782,247
Amounted to	44,22,812	1,769,125
Charges less than estimated	32,805	13,122
Deducting deficiency of Charges from deficiency of Revenue, the actual account was worse than estimated by	1,66,033	66,413

ESTIMATES 1795-6.

No. 4. Revenues estimated to amount to	50,60,975	2,024,330
Charges to	46,11,968	1,844,787
Estimated net Revenue	4,48,107	179,243

BOMBAY.—(RUPEE AT 2S. 3d.)

REVENUES.

	<i>Rupees.</i>	<i>£. Sterl.</i>
No. 7. Average Revenues, 1791-3 to 94-5,	25,000,60	281,257
No. 9. The Revenues 1794-5, estimated at	31,32,104	352,362
Actual amount in that year	27,77,600	322,804
Revenues less than estimated	3,54,504	39,882

CHARGES.

No. 9. Charges 1794-5, estimated at	67,33,791	757,551
Amounted to	62,03,768	697,724
Charges less than estimated	5,30,023	59,627
Deducting deficiency of Revenue from deficiency of Charge, the account is better than estimated by	175,519	19,745

ESTIMATES 1795-6.

No. 7. Revenues estimated to amount to	23,98,013	269,776
No. 8. Charges, to	63,90,250	718,901
So that the charges were estimated to exceed the Revenues	39,92,217	449,125

These were the three material presidencies to which the accounts abroad belonged, but to these, Mr. Dundas said, he would bring some other items of subordinate settlements, such as Fort Marlbro', Pinang, St. Helena, &c. which received supplies from Bengal.

BENCOOLEN AND OTHER SETTLEMENTS.

	Span. Dol. at 5s. each.	£. Sterl.
No. 10. Revenues of Fort Marlbro' on Average of 3 years, 1791-2 to 1793-4	18,611	4,653
Charges ditto	238,593	59,398
Supplies from Bengal to Marlbro', Pinang, St. Helena, &c. estimated for 1794-5	10,46,320	105,632
No. 18. The actual Amount was	7,48,572	74,857
Being less than estimated	2,97,748	29,775
No. 11. The estimated Supplies of 1795-6 took them at less than the former year, inasmuch as he took them only at	8,17,800	82,780

In order to aid the Committee to follow him through these statements, and draw a general result, he next proposed to combine the Presidencies, and take a general view of the whole.

GENERAL STATE OF REVENUES AND CHARGES IN INDIA.

				£. Sterl.
REVENUES.	No. 3. Bengal	C. Rs.	5,93,79,314	5,937,931
	No. 6. Madras	Pag.	44,39,455	1,775,782
	No. 9. Bombay	Rs.	27,77,600	312,480
				8,026,193
CHARGES.	No. 3. Bengal	C. Rs.	3,47,73,960	3,477,396
	No. 6. Madras	Pag.	44,22,812	1,762,125
	No. 9. Bombay	Rs.	62,03,768	697,924
				5,944,445
Net Revenues of the three Presidencies				2,081,748
No. 18. Deduct Supplies to Bencoolen, &c				74,857
Surplus Revenues 1794-5				2,006,891
Which were more than the estimates by				139,147

The sum might be considered as a free disposable sum for the purchase of investments, or for any other purpose; but previous to such an application, a deduction was to be made of different items, as follow:

Deduct INTEREST ON DEBTS to be paid from the Surplus.			
No. 18. Bengal	C. Rs.	39,94,223	399,422
No. 19. Madras	Pag.	22,019	8,807

No.

No. 20. Bombay	Rs. 6,76,198	76,072
Total Interest		<u>484,301</u>
Net Surplus from the Territorial Revenues would be		1,522,590
To which it was proper to add the amount of the Sales of Imports, Certificates, &c. [No. 15]		<u>562,177</u>
And the amount which would be applicable to the purchase of Investments, Payment of Commercial Charges would then be		<u>2,084,767</u>

The sum of 3,084,676l. remained applicable then to the purposes which he had stated, and accordingly it was his duty now to add the disposition of that sum, the accounts of which he understood had been made out with the utmost possible accuracy and which he believed appeared thus :

DISPOSITION OF THE SURPLUS FROM THE TERRITORIAL REVENUES.

No. 18. At Pengal, Investments, including Charges, &c.	C. Rs. 110,84,487	1,108,449
No. 19. N. a' ras, ditto	Pag. 13,41,021	536,808
No. 20. Bombay, ditto	Rs. 14,81,212	166,636
No. 22. Bencoolen, ditto	C. Rs. 2,65,524	26,552
		<u>1,838,445</u>
Which was short of the amount applicable to the purchase of Investments in the sum of		246,322

The committee would perceive, that the sum of 1,838,445l. was payable partly from the produce of the territorial revenues, and partly from the proceeds of the estimates, but that there still remained a sum of 246,322l. applicable to any other purpose. This sum he understood had been applied to the purchase of rice, and to the profit and loss account upon internal trade. He dared to say that he had fully answered the expectations of the committee, but it appeared that they had not yet a full account of the investments, for it was perfectly obvious that part had been taken from the assets, which were comprehended in No. 22, under the title of cargoes invoiced to Europe in 1794-5 to the amount of 2,178,118l. He had now stated what the amount of the receipts and disbursements of the Presidencies were in detail, and he should next proceed to state them in a general view. It was necessary to consider how far they could fairly and accurately produce estimates upon the territorial revenues, not only inasmuch as it was exceedingly material for their future calculations, but as it was material also for a future check on the expences. When the services abroad made proper estimates and checked the expenditure, there was great reason to hope for a great increase of revenue, while there was no cure against the rash and inconsiderate estimates which were formerly transmitted. He had always

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thought

thought this branch of the India affairs material, and for this reason he had been careful to provide the present estimates, the result of which he should lay before the committee on a future day. He proceeded to take a

GENERAL VIEW

OF THE RESULT OF THE ESTIMATES FOR 1795-6 COLLECTIVELY.

REVENUES No. 1. Bengal Cur. Rup.	5,63,12,780	£. Sterl.
4. Madras Pags.	50,60,075	5,631,278
6. Bombay Rupees	23,98,013	2,024,030
		<u>269,776</u>
		7,925,084
CHARGES No. 9. Bengal		
Current Rupees	3,58,88,236	£. 3,508,823
CHARGES No. 5. Madras		
Pagodas	46,11,968	1,844,787
CHARGES No. 8. Bombay		
Rupees	63,90,230	<u>718,901</u>
		6,072,411
Nett Revenues of the three Presidencies		1,852,573
DEDUCT, No. 11, Supplies to Bencoolen, &c.		<u>31,780</u>
ESTIMATED SURPLUS REVENUES 1795-6		1,770,793
less than last Year by £. 236,098		
DEDUCT, No. 16, Interest on Debts		
Current Rupees	40,02,523	<u>400,252</u>
Nett Estimated Surplus from the Territorial Revenues for 1795-6		1,370,541
ADD, No. 15. Estimated Amount of Sales of Imports, Certificates, &c. Current Rupees	42,46,252	<u>424,625</u>
Amount estimated to be applicable to Purchase of Investments, payment of Commercial Charges, &c.		<u>1,795,166</u>
Which was less than the actual amount of last Year by £. 289,601.		

DEBTS IN INDIA.

No. 16. Amount stated last Year	Cur. Rup.	£. Sterl.
Amount this Year	7,30,54,019	7,305,462
	<u>6,81,37,366</u>	<u>6,813,737</u>
Decrease	49,17,253	491,715
No. 17. Debts transferred in the Year exceeded the decrease, but could not be accounted for, by reason of the dates of accounts being different.	88,80,580	888,058
No. 16. Debts bearing Interest.		
Amount last Year	5,59,72,994	5,597,290
Amount this Year	<u>5,32,88,681</u>	<u>5,328,868</u>
Decrease of Debt bearing Interest	26,84,313	<u>268,431</u>
Amount of Interest payable by the Accounts of last Year	43,70,469	437,047
		Amount

Amount of Interest payable this Year	40,02,523	400,252
Decrease of Interest payable annually	3,67,946	36,79
No. 21. Affairs in India, consisting of Cash, Goods, &c. last Year	8,80,76,009	8,807,601
Ditto by the present Statements	8,86,72,663	8,867,266
Increase of Assets	5,96,654	59,665
Adding the Increase of Assets to the above Decrease of Debts, the Company's Af- fairs in India were better by	55,13,907	551,390

This was all that was necessary to be stated relative to the affairs in India, for he had stated what was the amount of the revenues of the several Presidencies separately and collectively; he had stated what was the amount of the charges of them in the same manner; what was the amount of their net revenues he had stated also, together with the net estimated surplus from the territorial revenues, the estimated amount of the sales of imports, certificates, &c. the amount estimated to be applicable to the purchase of investments, payment of commercial charges, &c. and the disposition of that sum. He had furthermore stated, what was the amount of debt transferred, together with the amount of debt bearing interest, the amount of interest payable by the accounts both of last year and the present, the decrease of debt bearing interest, and the annual decrease of interest. And lastly, he had stated the amount of assets in India last year, and the amount as it appeared by the present statements with the proceeds of exports and certificates, adding the encrease of assets to the decrease of debts, and thence drawing his general conclusion, that the Company's affairs in India only were better than they were upon his former statements in the sum of 551,390l.

HOME ACCOUNTS.

He next proceeded to the view of the East India Company's affairs at home; but before he brought any general result from the home accounts, he begged leave to observe, that when he first undertook the task of bringing these statements before the House, he confined himself solely to the statement of the affairs abroad. That was the only part for which he was responsible, and he did not then interfere with the Company's commercial concerns at home. He was afterwards led to deviate from his usual system of proceeding, and extend his researches, in consequence of the renewal of the

the Company's charter in 1793, when it became necessary to know from the nature of their estates abroad how much they could allow to Government for the renewal of that charter, from their commercial capital at home. The result of the accounts was prepared under the eye of an hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Francis Baring), and might therefore be depended upon for their accuracy. With respect to the participation of Government in the profits of the Company, it would appear from the combined state of the accounts at home and abroad, that the fairest expectations might be raised. He had some degree of satisfaction in stating this to the Committee, and would now continue to do what he considered as the general object of his duty, to lay before the committee the accounts of the revenue and expences upon the commercial engagements at home, in the same manner as he had stated the account of the revenue and expences abroad, and afterwards combine them both, in order to draw his general result. As the accounts at home were more immediately under the charge of the directors, the estimates were likely to be made with greater precision, and consequently little apprehension could be entertained against their truth and accuracy.

He had last year stated what he thought would be the probable amount of the produce of the Sales up to the 1st of March, and it was a matter of the greatest satisfaction to him this year to inform the Committee, that the actual produce of those Sales had far exceeded any expectation. The whole amount was

8,158,495

These Sales however it was necessary to observe had been assisted, and did not solely arise from the sale of Goods belonging to the Company, but included a considerable quantity of Dutch Goods sold according to the act, and an increase of the sale of goods to the amount of 156,000*l.* which were sold upon private account, which sale was enlarged by certain indulgencies occasioned by the provisions of the act of parliament. But notwithstanding this, it was to be remembered that some deductions were to be made in a time of war, and yet allowing those deductions, and deducting both the sales of Dutch and Private goods, it would appear that the sales of the Company's goods exclusively had exceeded the estimate in no less a sum than

1,071,469

The sales of the Company's goods were estimated at
And actually amounted to

5,517,500

6,588,969

The actual excess therefore was

1,071,469

The charges and profits on private trade were estimated at
The actual amount was

60,000

148,417

Being more than the estimate

£. 88,417

GENERAL RESULT.

Balance of cash estimated to be deficient last year

371,838

Actual balance remaining this year after paying off 498,225*l.* of the bonded debt, and having borrowed 150,000*l.* from the Bank

459,398

There

There was a striking reverse in regard to the future estimates for the year 1796-7, which required some explanation. Two accounts had been presented, the first prepared at periods directed by the act, and the other prepared from a variation of circumstances on the 31st of October; and the difference of these two estimates was £.1,147,123; but no blame could be thrown upon the company, since the circumstances, of which gentlemen were sufficiently apprized, were not then in view.

ESTIMATE, 1796 7.

Two accounts presented, the first prepared at periods directed by the act.

Expectations having varied, rendered it necessary to lay before the House that presented the 31st Oct.

The last estimate differs from the former in expected receipts from Sales less

On more than sales former years

£16,000

248,000

RESULT.

The first estimate expected a balance in favour, on the 1st of March, 1797, of

£.118,848

The last deficiency of

1,028,275

Difference £.1.147,123

He now came to the consideration of the

DEBTS AT HOME.

In March 1795, were

No. 23. in March 1796.

£. Sterl.

6,946,232

7,474,700

Increase

£. 528,377

There were certain Debts occasioned by the Rajah of Tanjore's Bonds being made payable in England. These Bonds bore a high interest in India of 12 per Cent. which by being exchanged for Bonds in England, was reduced to 6 per Cent. This consequently though it reduced the Debt abroad, and was of considerable advantage to the Company gave an additional burden to the Debts at home of

235,198

By the sale of Dutch Goods also for the produce of which the Company was accountable to Government there was a sum of

292,974

£.528,172

ASSETS.

At Home and afloat, 1st March 1795,
No. 23. 1st. March 1796,

10,413,254

12,024,312

Increase this year

1,610,958

Deducting increase of Debts above, from increases of Assets, the state of affairs at Home appeared better in 1796, by

1,082,581

This

This led him to combine the affairs at home with

CHINA AND ST. HELENA.

Balance last year in favour of the Company	979,152
Balance in favour of the Company this year	581,174
The present balance therefore was left by	397,978

GENERAL COMPARISON OF DEBTS AND ASSETS.

Decrease of Debts in India	491,705	
Increase of Debts at home	528,377	
	Increase of debts	36,652
Increase of Assets in India	59,665	
Increase of Assets at Home	1,610,958	
	1,670,623	
Deduct balance at China and St. Helena lefts	397,978	
	Net increase of Assets	1,272,645
Deducting increase of Debts as above, the general improvements was		1,235,993
The India Accounts of this year being nearly of the same date, the improvement was corroborated by the balance of the stock accounts.		
Balance of Stock by computation last year was		5,493,774
No. 24. this year		6,734,264

The Company's Affairs were therefore better as to Debts and Assets 1,240,490

He wished to let the committee see how far his prophecy, delivered at a former period, had been fulfilled. It would appear that the revenues for the last year were, after deducting the increased charges from them more than what they had previously been estimated by him. The charges had increased to more than one million; and taking this excess from the increased revenue, the excess of the revenue over that of former years would amount to 306,248l. This would appear from the following statements, in which a comparison might be formed between the estimates made in the year 1793, and the accounts then presented.

COMPARISON OF ACCOUNTS PRESENTED THIS YEAR, WITH THE ESTIMATE ON WHICH THE ARRANGEMENT OF 1793 WAS FORMED.

	Estimate	Actual		Actual Act.
	Feb. 1793.	1794-5.		1794, 5.
	£.	£.		better than
				Estimate
Bengal, Madras, and				£.
Bombay		6,960,625	8,026,193 more	1,062,568
Charges of ditto		5,288,125	5,944,443 deduct	756,20
Revenues more		1,775,500	2,081,748,	more 206,248
				Supplies

Supplies from Bengal to Bencoolen, &c.	£50,000	74,857	more	24,857
Interest on debts	571,923	484,301	less	72,662
Deduct	611,923	559,158	less than estimate	52,765
Net revenues	1,163,577	1,522,590	more than estm.	359,013
Receipts from sales of imports, and from certificates	350,000	562,177	more	212,177
Surplus	1,513,577	2,084,767	more than estm.	571,190

The estimated surplus of 1795-6 is £.1,795,166, which exceeds the estimate of 1793 by £.281,589.

SALE AND RECEIPTS.

RECEIPTS	Estimate 1793.	Actual 1795,6.	
Goods sold	£. 4,988,303	6,191,894	
Profit on Private Trade	70,000	148,417	
Interest on Annuities	36,227	36,227	
	£. 5,094,527	6,376,538	more £. 1,282,011
PAYMENTS			
Customs	633,850	677,786	
Freight	690,670	1,250,520	
Goods and Stores exported	1,017,000	1,227,632	
Bills of Exchange or Bullion	644,580	913,290	
Charges Merchandize	375,000	634,664	
Interests on Bonds and Dividends on Stock	528,000	722,172	
Indigo Contractors		10,485	
Teas purchased on the Continent		54,492	
	3,889,100	5,491,041	more £. 1,601,941
Surplus	£. 205,427	885,497	less 390,930

After having stated these to the House, Mr. Dundas said he wished to draw the attention of the Committee to some other points, least they might complain that he had not given his opinion as to the ideas he himself entertained concerning the Company's interests either in India or at home, or concerning the future state of their affairs. Although he had stated a large surplus of revenue existing in India, he did not mean to say, that such surplus would be sufficient for the future operations of the Company in India. It was very singular, that in the statements concerning the Bengal revenue, there was not an item which did not exceed the estimates he had made at a former period—such was the accuracy and fidelity with which it had been prepared. But the same was not to be expected in the next accounts that should be given,

there must be a considerable diminution in some articles, particularly that of opium, which could not be so productive during war. He had no doubt however that this deficiency would be made up by an increase on other articles. But the great thing, that must prevent the revenue of India from being so productive next year, would be the increased charges, on account of the increased military arrangements in India. The House would recollect, that he had last year laid before Parliament a plan for redressing the grievances complained of by the officers in the Company's service. These meritorious men had laboured under many hardships; they had not had the same chance with his Majesty's officers of being put upon the staff. They could not return to their own country, for the benefit of their health without giving up their commissions and losing their pay; so that they had only to chuse either of these alternatives—that of dying in an unhealthy country, or losing their support. They had not often the means to enable them to return; nor any half-pay if they should quit the service. These were the grievances which they complained of; and he certainly thought that their complaints were just. He accordingly entered upon the means which he thought would remedy them. They were now completely remedied; and the regulations to that effect had gone out to India, where they were highly approved of by the great bulk of the officers, who received them with perfect satisfaction; and notwithstanding they might not have met the sanguine wishes of some, their good effects were felt by all who viewed them with candour and reason. But he did not, on account of the dissatisfaction of a few, regret the justice which he had done, or the indulgence he had given, because the great mass was relieved and benefited thereby. These regulations were founded in justice and policy; they were to be enforced and carried into execution; and the doing of that must be attended with considerable additional expence. The whole of the expence might amount to four millions; and the whole of the surplus should be applied to the purpose of enabling the Company to enlarge their investments. He thought it necessary to speak out plainly his opinion concerning the future events in India, in order that the House might see how they would turn out. There was nothing that he had hitherto stated, which had not turned out even beyond what he had given reason to expect. He must say, that he then felt that a progressive improvement either in one, or in the whole of our Indian settlements, might be expected in future. According to the arrangements

arrangements that had been made by a noble Lord (Marquis Cornwallis) in India, he would say with certainty, that property would enjoy perfect security ; and from thence would arise happiness and confidence. Another circumstance that must add to the growing wealth of India, was, that within these few years, population had made a rapid increase, which could not arise from any other cause than the dearest wishes of the people to settle, and continue in a country where they felt their situations superior to what it could be in any other. This was the greatest proof of the prosperity of a country, without which population could never increase. The increase of population was proved by the increase of the revenue ; but particularly by that of the duty on salt. The landholders of the country enjoyed a state of security and happiness. On these grounds he felt himself entitled to say, that our possessions in India were more prosperous than they ever had been ; and that their prosperity and revenues were increasing. Madras was now in a progressive state of improvement as well as Bengal, notwithstanding its having been so lately the seat of war. Bombay would be equally productive ; as well as all the new settlements into which industry should be introduced. He would say nothing at that time about the treaties with the Rajahs of Travancore or Tanjore, because the propriety of them was disputed ; and he would take another opportunity of stating them to the House : he had no doubt, however, but that any change which might take place, would be for the better. He could not help taking the present occasion to observe the great difference between the affairs of the India Company at the present, and in former periods. There was a time when it used only to be debated in the House, whether the Company were bankrupts or not. How very different was it now, when it was only to set out from a given point in order to estimate the progressive state of their prosperity ? The expences of the Company were not much beyond their natural course, or their estimates. It was, nevertheless, proper for him to say, that in the next statement the expences would be greater, because most of the expences were incurred at a period posterior to the date of the accounts then before the committee. It was however scarcely necessary for him to observe that these expences were greatly increased by the armaments that had been fitted out against the Island of Ceylon, the Spice Islands, and the other possessions that had been captured from the Dutch ; the success of which expeditions was so honourable to the officers conducting them, and must tend so much

to the benefit of this country ! He was sorry not to see an hon. gentleman (Mr. Fox) then in his place, who on a former occasion had talked so much of the blood and treasure wasted in India. He wished he could inform that hon. gentleman that the expence attending the whole of those splendid conquests was defrayed out of the revenues of India. He therefore hoped the hon. gentleman would not again talk of blood and treasure wasted by this country in these expeditions. With respect to the Cape of Good Hope, his opinion concerning the possession of that settlement was as different from that of an hon. Baronet (Sir F. Baring) as light from darkness. On a due examination of all the affairs he had stated, there appeared to him to be no earthly doubt, but that all the expectations he had held out would be realized. On another topic it was necessary for him to be a little more particular ; and that was concerning the participation which Government was to receive. He hoped, on this occasion, that some champions on the Opposition Bench would start up, and take the place of the hon. gentlemen who were absent ; if not, he should perhaps, in consequence of the absence of those gentlemen, find it necessary to be more accurate. If it should then be asked what became of the promised participation, he would answer, that he had never promised the public such participation. The statements he was accustomed to make in that House, concerning India affairs, had always found their way to the public. He would then read to the Committee a part of the speech he had made in 1793, at the renewal of the Company's charter, by which it would appear whether his prophecy had been fulfilled. The arrangement made at that period was a peace arrangement. It had not been since that time much affected by the war, for the public did, in the course of two year of war, actually receive one half of the participation. He desired, therefore, that when any ill-mentioned orator belonging to the Company should start up, either in that House or in any other place, and endeavour to damp and diminish the prospects of our Indian commerce, he would recollect the grounds he went upon. The real question upon this subject was, whether the hopes he had held out to the publick concerning the participation, were too sanguine. He recollected his having stated, that from our great naval superiority this war, it was not likely there would be so many captures as in former wars. Whatever expectations he had held out, they were fulfilled. Our cargoes were, by the providence of God, protected on their return
from

from India, and they got safe to that country. It was impossible to make the ships take so much freight in time of war as in peace; therefore as the revenues could not be so great at the one period as at the other, it was fair that the publick might expect such a participation as he had stated in 1793. The freight a few years ago was no more than 600,000*l.* Last year it was one million; and for next year it was stated at 1,900,000*l.* a sum triple that of the original calculation made in time of peace. Therefore, upon this ground, the public was entitled to look for the full participation of 500,000*l.* in time of peace. This was not all: he would lay before the committee another circumstance, to prove what he had advanced: it concurred so much with his own ideas, that he could not forbear mentioning it, although he must thereby publish the name of a gentleman who had not authorized him so to do. He had received a letter from Mr. Brown, a respectable dealer, and one of the largest purchasers at the India sales, and as conversant as any man in the concerns of the East India Company, in which Mr. Brown gave it as his opinion that the importation of the Company's piece goods, from Bengal, Surat, &c. would exceed, in time of peace, the average of the three last years, and that the difference in the estimate between a time of peace and war, would amount to above one million sterling. He declared, he was by no means disposed to retract what he had stated as to the increasing revenues of the Company. The deficiency of the cash-estimate of March last, made no difference in the general state of the Company's affairs, as he shewed that they had means amply sufficient to supply that deficiency. In 1793, they possessed government annuities to the amount of 1,200,000*l.* and now they hold no less a sum than 3,000,000*l.* besides which, above 500,000*l.* of their own bonds had been brought in. What he had stated, Mr. Dundas said, served to shew, that although the Company, from various peculiar and concurring circumstances, could not avail themselves of the full extent of their means, yet that there was no real deficiency of these means, or any proof of poverty, or, as had formerly been suggested in debate, of bankruptcy, but only, that their funds in time of war were not equal to a time of peace. From the general view of the Company's affairs, and on the face of their estimates, Mr. Dundas declared he saw no reason for imputing to them any extravagance, or want of commercial skill. With regard to the Company's bonds, although it was proper that they should have a power of circulating them to the amount of one million,

million, yet as a capital embarked in a ship for India could not find its way back to the Company's treasury in less than three or four years, Mr. Dundas contended that this was not a proper shape in which to have a commercial concern on such a capital; these bonds were liable to such a variety of accidents in the market, that he could not help being of opinion, that they were not the proper means of carrying on such a trade, or that it was right for so great a Company to rest upon such a basis; and that that the Company would judge wisely, if, instead of circulating so many bonds, they would rather rest upon their permanent capital. To augment this capital, under certain restrictions appeared to him to be a more expedient, certain, and creditable mode, than any other which they could adopt. The Company's stock was guaranteed out of the assets, and a sinking fund, which formed this guarantee. He would also state his sentiments, that even if the Company had no immediate pressure on their cash, he should think it their interest at this moment to increase their capital; for no one could suppose that, if their capital in 1793 was barely capable of carrying on their trade, it could possibly be applicable now, without its further extension. The sales of the present year amounted to eight millions, which exclusive of the sale of Dutch goods, &c. exceeded above one million the estimate of the last; the undeniable inference therefore was, that the trade of the East India Company had increased, was increasing, and would continue to increase. It therefore became the interest of the Company, and of the publick, to take care, lest, from the want of an efficient capital, that trade should be suffered to pass into other hands. It might indeed be said, that this extended trade partly arose from the declension of that of other countries; admitting this, he would at the same time remark, that supposing the Dutch were restored to the full possession of all their power in India, and they were now to renew their commerce, yet, as their ships were destroyed, and their capital annihilated, it would be impossible for them to fill up the gap which had been occasioned by the circumstances of the present war, in their Oriental commerce. Was it not wise then, he would ask, when East India Company had such large openings to wealth, and extended sources of commerce presented to them, to take advantage of so favourable a circumstance, and, by an increase of their capital, pour the riches of the Ganges into the Thames? Was it not their duty to carry on their commerce so that the individual should not suffer by the monopoly they enjoyed; and

and that they should have recourse to those means, which under such circumstances, would occur to those who were best able to carry on such a trade? He declared his opinion to be, in one word, that the East India Company would neither consult their interest and credit, nor fulfill their duty to the publick, resulting from the monopoly they enjoyed, if, notwithstanding any temporary pressure, they did not make every provision to fill up that gap in the India commerce, which now subsisted, and particularly from the destruction of the French and Dutch settlements and commerce in India.

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* then presented a string of resolutions pursuant to his statements; and upon the first resolution being put, viz.

“That it appears that the annual Revenues of the East India Company, in the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, and from Benares and Oude, under the heads of Mint or Coinage Duties, Post-office collections, Benares revenue, Oude subsidy, Land revenues, Customs, and the receipts from sales of Salt and Opium, amounted on the average of three years 1792-3 to 1794-5 inclusive, to the sum of five Crore, seventy seven lacks, forty two thousand one hundred and thirty current Rupees.”

Mr. *Biddulph* congratulated the House upon finding that the accounts of the East India Company's affairs were more clear and regular this year than they had formerly been; still he thought them capable of being more so than they were, in order to enable the members of that House to form those conclusions which should be drawn from them. In order to this, he thought nothing would form so true a basis as presenting an account of the actual rents of the territorial possessions of India. For his part, he could not conceive the affairs of the East India Company to be so flourishing as had been stated. The statements mentioned, that 2,500,000*l.* were annually drawn from the lands in Bengal; but he much doubted, whether it was possible for a country possessing no mines, but importing all their metals, to yield any permanent income to that amount. The industry of the inhabitants might go some way towards it, and obviate those destructive circumstances which must otherwise have overwhelmed them in distress; but he could not conceive that such a country could yield a permanent or increasing income under a constant drain, and deprived of opulent families and flourishing Zemindars. He observed, that a variety of deductions were to be made from the sum stated as applicable

to

to the Bengal investitures, which would reduce it from 1,500,000*l.* to 1,000,000*l.* and adverted to the deficiency of the opium sales, the expences of the military establishment, and the encreased expence of the new establishment in Bengal for the administration of justice, (a sum which he stated at between three and 400,000*l.* a year.) It was his wish, he said, to be informed respecting the nature and extent of the jurisdiction of those courts, and the nature of the laws imposed upon the inhabitants of that country. He concluded by dissenting from the resolution, so far as any inference was drawn from the statements of the former year.

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* said, the resolutions only recorded matters of fact, which were drawn from the accounts laid upon the table.

Sir *Francis Baring* believed that the accounts were as accurate as the nature of the case would admit. He said, he had felt some alarm with regard to the army arrangements, and doubted whether the European officers were satisfied with the army regulations which had been sent to India; and he also feared, that the permanent settlement of the revenue of the country would produce much disturbance at some future period. He had formerly been of opinion, that the affairs of the Company, though affected by the war, were more flourishing than he now thought them to be. With regard to the Cape of Good Hope and the Spice Islands, he should be very sorry to have an increased expence on that account. The Cape cost the Dutch annually above 500,000*l.* As to the Spice Islands, he said, if they were not held on the same plan as the Dutch held them, they could never be rendered profitable; and if so held, it must be in a way revolting to the feelings of Englishmen. He thought that if, after the peace, foreigners were encouraged to trade to India, it would be impossible for the East-India Company to supply the wants of this country, or keep up its sales to the present amount.

Mr. *D. Scott*, confirmed the general statment of Mr. Dundas as to the encreasing prosperity of India, and the progressive encrease of profit upon all the sales. He stated the advantage to be derived from the commerce of Bengal as well as China. Mr. Scott observed that it cost the Company above a million additional on account of freight, but, in the event of peace, this would be saved, and consequently a much larger profit would arise upon the sales, besides, in times of peace, many more markets would be open for disposing of the

the commodities of India. Mr. Scott declared, he widely differed from the honourable Baronet, who thought we should be better without our possessions in the east. The Cape of Good Hope and the Island of Ceylon, were of the greatest importance, next to the possession of Bengal, for securing the Empire of the East. With respect to the Spice islands, he thought it better that this country should have them than the French, though perhaps it was better that they should be left entirely free.

Sir W. Broughton was sorry that any doubt should be entertained of the permanency of the East India Company's revenues, when the money raised from that trade was the same as had been formerly received; not indeed by England, but by the whole of Europe. The destruction of the trade of other countries had occasioned this great increase in ours, and he saw no reason why that which was dependant only on our industry should not continue. In fact, the trade in foreign bottoms to India was the private trade of our own countrymen, and the direction, which it had now taken, was the legitimate channel in which it ought to flow.

Mr. *Hussey* contended, that the revenue of India, after the necessary deductions, fell short of the appropriation of a million, nor could he look on the revenues of the Company as increasing, because the estimates of the present year were less than the former. The honourable Secretary had stated, that the dates were lessened, and the assets encreased, but that had not been accounted for. He insisted that the company was now insolvent, as it would turn out, that were all its effects converted into money, it would not have enough to pay off all demands; the former he calculated at 6,734,000*l.* and the latter would amount to 7,780,000*l.*

Mr. *Metcalf* opposed Mr. *Hussey's* statement in a short speech, founded on Mr. Secretary Dundas's statement in the Budget.

Mr. *Dundas* contradicted Mr. *Hussey's* assertion, and shewed that the Company had almost enough to pay their personal debts out of their personal effects, and if to these was added their old property, not only would they be able to pay to the amount of their capital, at the end of the charter, but be a rich society indeed, were they to divide the surplus among them, if, he added, they should be so ill advised as to adopt such a determination.

Mr. *Hussey* asked whether the dominion over this landed property was not under the board of controul?

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* replied, that the board of controul has done little injury, he believed, to them in the enjoyment of their territories. But this million a year was even independent of that board, and was given them by the act of King William, passed in 1693.

Mr. *Metcalf* said a few words to the same effect.—The resolutions were then severally put and agreed to.

The House being resumed, the report was ordered to be received the next day.

The amended augmentation Militia Bill, and the provisional Cavalry Bill went through the Committee; the reports were received; to be further considered on Thursday, and printed.

The report of the additional Customs Bill was brought up, and an amendment introduced exempting teas under 2s. 6d. *per lb.* instead of 2s. from the new additional duty. The bill was ordered to be engrossed, and read a third time on Thursday.

The Auction duty Bill was read a third time and passed.

Mr. *David Scott* brought up a petition from the East India Company, praying leave to increase their capital stock, &c. Ordered to be laid on the table,

The Bill for additional duty on Postage, &c. was read a third time, and passed.

The report of the new Scottish Distillery Bill was brought up; the amendments were read and agreed to.

Mr. *Rose* proposed a clause, to enable such distillers as did not choose to continue to work their stills under the new duty to withdraw their working on or before the 27th of January next.—Read, agreed to, made part of the Bill, which was ordered to be engrossed, and read a third time the next day, if then engrossed.

The Bill for raising the militia for the Tower Hamlets was read a second time, and ordered to be committed to a Committee of the whole House on Thursday next.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, December 21.

The *Marquis of Bute* took his seat.

On the motion for their Lordships going into a Committee upon the Loan Bill.

The

The *Duke of Norfolk* said, that he had heard some circumstances in the mode of subscription to this loan, which rendered it highly proper that the list of subscribers should be laid upon their Lordships table. He thought it his duty also, as the rate of interest was so much higher than that which is authorized by law in this country, to put some questions to his Majesty's ministers respecting the reasons of granting so high interest, before he could give his assent to the Bill. But as none of the King's ministers were present, he moved, that the commitment of the bill be put off till the next day. His Grace's motion was agreed to by their Lordships.

Heard Counsel on Scotch appeal, Ferguson of Rath against Gillespie, minister of Arrochay.

The further hearing of this cause, which is of great importance to the Scottish clergy, was postponed till the first day of meeting after the holidays.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, *December 21.*

Mr. *Elliot*, the Chairman of the Southwark committee, appeared at the bar and stated, that the committee appointed to try the merits of the petition of George Tierney, esq. complaining of an undue election and return for the Borough of Southwark, had directed him to report their determination to the House, which is as follows:

That G. W. Thellusson esq. is not duly elected a Burgess to serve in this present parliament for the said Borough of Southwark.

And also, that the said Select Committee have determined,

That George Tierney, esq. the petitioner, ought to have been returned a Burgess, to serve in parliament for the said Borough.

And also, that the said Select Committee have determined,

That the said George Tierney, esq. is duly elected a Burgess, &c. to serve in parliament for the said Borough.

And also, that the said Select Committee have determined,

That the petition of the said George Tierney, esq. did not appear to the said Select Committee to be frivolous or vexatious.

And also, That the said select committee have determined. That the opposition of the said G. W. Thelluffon, to the said petition, did not appear to the said committee to be frivolous or vexatious.

The report was brought up,

Mr. *Elliot* moved, That the clerk of the crown do attend the House the next day to amend the return of the said election; and that, instead of the name of G. W. Thelluffon, Esq. be substituted that of George Tierney, Esq. —ordered.

The Cape of Good Hope navigation bill was brought in and read a first time.—ordered to be read a second time the next day.

The report of the committee on the papers from the India House was brought up, and the resolutions agreed to by the House.

PROMULGATION OF THE STATUTES.

Mr. *Abbot* said, that having brought up the report from the committee, appointed to consider of the best means of promulgating the statutes, he rose to give notice that he should take an early opportunity after the recess, to propose to the House some measures founded on facts contained in that report.

The Scots distillery Bill was read a third time and passed. The House in a committee of supply, among other sums voted a sum of 540,000*l.* for the relief of the suffering clergy and laity of France. The report was ordered to be received the next day, and the committee to sit again on Friday.

In a committee of ways and means, approved of the resolutions relative to the terms of the loan.

NAVY BILLS.

In a committee on the Bill for the more speedy payment of navy, transport, and victualling Bills.

Mr. *Huffey* objected to the regulations of the Bill, which in his opinion would not enable the public to go to the market with advantage: but would on the contrary have the effect to encourage injurious speculation.

Chancellor of the Exchequer explained the nature of the Bill. All that it enacted was, that a navy bill should not run more than three months. The interest was calculated as nearly as possible at the rate of five per cent.; from the best information

tion he could obtain, he had reason to believe that the mode of payment proposed by the present Bill would be perfectly agreeable to the parties concerned.

Mr. *Huffey* persisted in his objections. The Bill was read a first and second time, and agreed to by the committee, and the report ordered to be received the next day.

Mr. *Biddulph* said, he had the preceding night, proposed some questions with respect to the new system of India judicature, in answer to which he could obtain no satisfactory information. He wished some account of the institution to be laid before the House, and if ministers persisted to decline bringing forward the subject, he would make a motion for that purpose.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* suggested the difficulty of complying with the wishes of the honourable gentleman, from the complicated and extensive nature of the subject.

Mr. *Biddulph* enforced the importance of obtaining satisfactory information with respect to an object which interested no less than fifteen millions of people. Several new codes of criminal law had lately been brought forward, in all of which the severity of former enactments had been considerably mitigated. He was desirous to ascertain whether the same mild and equitable spirit had been followed in the regulations of this new code of India judicature. Since he could not obtain from ministers an account of the institution, he gave notice that he should next day make a motion, That there be laid upon the table copies of the correspondence between the governor-general of Bengal, and the board of control, relative to the new courts of India judicature, previous to such courts being instituted.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THURSDAY, *December 22.*

The Bills on the table were severally read.

The Bill for the excise augmentation on auctions, bricks, cocoa, &c. the stage coach duty Bill, the Scotch distillery Bill, and that for the alteration of the duty on postage of letters, were brought up from the Commons, and severally read a first time.

LOAN BILL.

The order of the day for their lordships to resolve themselves into a committee of the whole House on the Bill for granting

granting to his majesty a loan of eighteen millions by way of annuities, being read,

The *Duke of Norfolk* said, before their lordships went into a committee on the Bill, he begged he might be permitted to submit a few observations to their lordships consideration on the subject. The House were now, he observed, about to give their authority to an act of the House of Commons, by which they had consented, in the present enormous state of the national debt, to add no less a sum than eighteen millions sterling. Before he suffered the business to proceed, he hoped that when the magnitude and importance of the subject was duly considered, he should not be deemed unreasonable if he asked one or two questions of his majesty's ministers, and requested answers to the same. The first question he should ask, was, whether in the opinion of ministers, this sum, large as it was, would be the whole of the supplies that would be wanted for the service of the ensuing year? The next thing to which he should request to draw their lordships attention was, to the nature of the loan itself, and the bargain which the subscribers had made on their own behalf. Every subscriber of 100*l.* was to receive stock to the amount of 112*l.* 10*s.* which was in the first instance a *bonus* of 12*l.* 10*s.* For his original subscription, he was to receive an interest of five per cent. and at a limited period of two years after the termination of the war, he had a right to call for his principal of 112*l.* 10*s.* to be immediately paid in specie, if he thought proper. His grace said, that at present a negotiation for peace was pending, and no one wished more sincerely than himself, that it might be the means of restoring that much wished for and much wanted blessing. Allowing that the negotiation should ultimately be crowned with success, he would suppose that the terms might be settled in the course of one year. The time then at which the subscribers would be entitled to call in their stock, and insist on being paid in money if they chose, would be three years. All this time they would be in the receipt of five per cent. for 112*l.* 10*s.* If at the expiration of the two years after the termination of the war, they should insist on receiving the whole of their stock in ready specie, and unfortunately another war should, at, or immediately before that period, break out, their lordships must see what a dreadful predicament this country must be in, to be called upon in so distressing a moment, when it might have so many difficulties to contend with in raising the then necessary supplies, to discharge so large a sum as might be required of this old loan of eighteen millions

millions in ready money, be the price of stocks at that time whatever they might. This was certainly a possible case, and as such it behoved their lordships, as far as possible, to guard against it. For this purpose, his grace begged leave to make a motion to the following purport?

"That instructions be given to the Committee to receive a clause, empowering his Majesty's Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, to delay the payment of the capital of each subscriber, after the termination of the war, till such times as the three per cent. consols. should be 75."

The motion being read from the Woolfack,

Lord Grenville said, that as to the question put by the noble Duke, it was impossible for him to give a direct answer to it. The estimates of this year had, like those of all former years, been made as those which, upon every probable contingency that could be foreseen, would be necessary, and would be sufficient. In all wars estimates of expences were unavoidable; and all estimates were made as nearly as possible to embrace and cover every object of expence which could fairly be calculated on. In the present estimate all possible care had been taken that should be the case, and he saw no likelihood at present of any new expeditions or other efforts which were calculated to produce any extraordinaries that had not been provided for. It was impossible, however, to foresee or answer precisely for what might happen. With respect to the other part of his Grace's speech, he must for one certainly oppose the motion made by the noble Duke. The loan which had been made was certainly different from former loans, but it was so chiefly on account of the very advantageous terms of it—terms which were much below the price of the market, and the expeditious manner in which it was filled, served at once to shew the zeal of every description of persons for the service of the country; to shew at the same time that the spirit of the country was not depressed; and to convince the rash and desperate minds of the enemy, that our resources were not in that weak and declining state which they had vainly and foolishly flattered themselves they were. It was not probable, therefore, that persons so situated would ever think of distressing their country, by insisting on being paid their stock in specie, as supposed by the noble Duke.

The Duke of Norfolk said, it was undoubtedly true that it was impossible to foresee what exigencies might arise and therefore what had fallen from the noble Secretary of State, relative to the question he had asked as to the sufficiency of the sum now required,

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red, he should not press it any further. He could not however give up his motion so easily. The subscribers to the present loan had, he allowed, come forward in a very ready manner, and had very speedily filled up the sum required, but he could by no means admit that in doing so they had discovered any violent zeal for the service of the country. They had certainly very materially served themselves, for they had gained an interest superior to any they could have obtained in any other legal way. He meant the great majority of those who were not what were usually termed the *monied* men of the nation. The noble Secretary of State had said, that men thus shewing their zeal, it was not probable they would insist on their receiving their stock in ready money, in a future moment of possible pressure and distress. The Duke said, he did not think they ought to look to a probable case; for his part, he was afraid avarice and self-interest were but too prevalent, and therefore too parbable to be trusted to. This was undoubtedly a possible case, and ought on that account to be guarded against. In making the present motion for that purpose, his Grace said, he only did what he conceived to be his duty, and he should leave it to their Lordships to decide upon his motion.

The question being put, the motion was negatived without a division. The Bill then went through a committee of the whole House, and the report was received. After which, on a motion that the Bill be then read a third time,

The *Duke of Norfolk* rose, and apologized for taking up more of their Lordships time, but he could not he said suffer the third reading of the Bill to take place, without submitting to the consideration of the House some further observations, and another motion which he then held in his hand. The noble Secretary of State, had mentioned the present loan as expressive, on the part of the several subscribers, of their zeal for the service and interest of their country. He could by no means view it in that light. Former loans had, in general, been made between ministers and a certain description of persons in this country, called the *monied* men—that is, bankers and other persons who, in general, made money the object of their traffic. By using these terms of description, he did not mean to convey any harsh idea of those persons, but only to define clearly of what description they really were. It appears then that money being the commodity in which they peculiarly dealt, and government the medium or channel through which they could traffic to the greatest extent, that of course they would endeavour to make the

the best bargain they could for themselves. They had a right so to do. Ministers, on the part of the country, would certainly do the same. This description of persons, the *monied* men, having bargained for the loan on certain terms, take upon themselves the raising of the whole sum wanted. Perhaps, in many instances, ministers apparently made bargains very much in favour of the country according to the price of the markets. Behind this body of *monied* men, however, there stood another phalanx, consisting of men of other descriptions, and of different ranks in life. Gentlemen of landed properties, members of both Houses of parliament, and in other situations, who were capable of assisting ministers on various occasions, and in different degrees, who came in each for a separate share in these loans, and who might not, therefore, be very particular in scrutinizing into the terms on which they were made. Such were the nature and principle of former loans. The present loan was certainly different, for every individual was at liberty to subscribe as much as he thought fit, and the terms were very plain and easily understood. Having already stated what they were, it was unnecessary for him to repeat them. The noble Secretary of State had inferred, that from the quickness with which the whole sum of eighteen millions had been subscribed, it was a proof of the zeal of the subscribers for the interests and service of the country. He on the contrary, thought it appeared to be more for the benefit of the subscribers themselves. He had, he said, made a calculation on the subject, and he found they would make near ten per cent. for their money, a sum which is almost double what the law of the land allows in any case but this of a loan, which is exempted by the act. Thus they receive a rate of interest for their money, which in any other case or transaction would convict them of usury. His calculation, he said, was very short and plain. From the *bonus* given, the interest upon the whole sum, and other advantages, he found that if the War lasted three years, the subscribers would receive *ten per cent.* if five years, *eight per cent.*—and if six years, *seven and a half per cent.* for their money. These were the men who were held up as acting with zeal for the interest of their country, who were receiving interest for their money at such a rate, as in any other case but this, a court of justice would send them, instead of to the Bank to receive their dividends, to the King's Bench prison, or subject them to the heavy penalties, which the law has in all other cases laid on usurious transactions.

actions. Among the subscribers to this loan, and under such circumstances of receiving this high rate of interest, his grace said, he was astonished to find many names of the first rank and distinction, not among the mercantile and monied men only, but in the first rank and distinction among their Lordships; dignified clergy and others. He had once thought of moving to have all the names published, but finding it would be too troublesome, had waved that idea. He was extremely sorry, however, to see that persons in those elevated ranks of life should shew themselves eager to subscribe to a loan which exacts so high an interest for their money, and that interest to be paid out of the pocket of the people. He thought that in moments of publick exigency like the present, those who had it in their power to subscribe large sums of money, and were eager to do so, ought to do it without a *bonus*, and to take for it only at the rate which is fixed as the highest legal interest of the country, *five per cent.* He had therefore thought it his duty to form a motion for a clause to that effect: he might perhaps be told that those persons of high rank and station, who had subscribed on the terms as they stood, intended, when they went to receive their money, to take no more than the lawful interest of *five per cent.*; he was of opinion, however, that a clause ought to be added by way of amendment to the Bill, which should give every subscriber a power to do so if he might think proper. Such a clause would be a test of the quantum of *actual* zeal with which each subscriber set down his name for the *interests* of his country, and not for those of himself; and might at the same time ultimately prove the means of a prodigious saving to the publick purse. His Grace then made a motion, the substance of which was nearly as follows:

“That the cashier of the Bank be empowered to call upon each contributor or subscriber to the loan, to take the sum subscribed by him without the premium of twelve and a half *per cent.* and interest for his money advanced at five *per cent.* and that he be empowered to contract with each contributor to that effect, at the time of the first payment; and that a list of the names of the persons so acceding, should be made out and laid before both Houses of parliament.”

The motion being read from the woollack.

Lord Grenville said he rose to oppose it; he expressed great surprise at what had fallen from the noble duke, relative to the loan, which had universally been allowed, he said, to be one of the best that had ever been made for this country.

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He could not have supposed the noble duke would have entertained such sentiments concerning it. He believed he was the only man in that House, or in the country, who did so; at least, he thought, there was not above two, and he was convinced, that in speaking his sentiments in so favourable a manner as he (the noble secretary) had done—he had spoken the decided sentiments of a most decided majority of the people. He was astonished to hear the noble duke coldly say that those who dealt in money, such as bankers and other wealthy capitalists, carried on a traffick that was not disgraceful. The noble duke must know that the monied men were a class as honourable, as liberal, and as respectable as any in the kingdom, men to whom this country and government were highly indebted for the present high pitch of prosperity to which they had arrived. Their whole attention was devoted to money concerns, and they were bound to make the most of their own property, in duty to themselves. The present interest was certainly below the market, and therefore it was reasonable and fair, and those who subscribed to the present loan had thereby shewn, in the hour of public exigency, the greatest zeal for their country and its interests. His lordship commented on the manner in which the duke had expressed his astonishment at seeing the names of several persons of the first rank in that House as subscribers to the present loan, and said, that in becoming so, they had certainly added additional lustre to their rank, in standing forward at such a moment, amongst all orders and descriptions of persons. Lord Grenville concluded by observing, that he was amazed to hear such doctrine as had been advanced about the rate of interest, and was surprised those who had then thought it too high, had not come forward, and offered to supply the money at a more reasonable and lower rate. As to the names which the noble duke had intended to move to have published, he should have no objection to such a motion, for he was convinced the publication would redound much to their honour.

The Duke of *Norfolk* said, that having made his motion from a thorough conviction of its propriety and of his own duty, he should, notwithstanding all that had fallen from the noble Secretary of State, persist in it. He contended that the interest was too high, and was sorry to find that persons of the highest rank and station in that House had subscribed to a loan, which sanctioned and grasped at such an interest. After the lamentable example which had been seen in the fate of the nobility and clergy of a neighbouring

country, against whom the strongest accusation had been, that they had used their wealth and power to the injury of those, for the purpose of whose protection they were originally given, as the merited rewards of exalted worth, raised to rank by praise-worthy and dignified ambition: he was sorry to see that persons in similar stations here had given the smallest shadow of idea, that dignified ambition might become the handmaid, and subservient to titled avarice. As to the surprise of the noble Secretary of State, "that those who found fault with the interest being too high, did not come forward to furnish the money at a lower rate," he had two answers to make—first, that there was no time for doing so; and secondly, if the observation of the noble Secretary was really serious, "that he believed not above two persons in the kingdom were of the same opinion, as he was," it would have been vain and nugatory, as no two men in the kingdom could pretend to advance such a sum between them as eighteen millions.

The Duke of *Bedford* said, that whatever degree of censure or blame might attach upon his noble friend in the opinion of the noble Secretary of State, for the motion which he had brought forward, he begged leave to put in for his share of it, but he declared it would not set very heavy on their shoulders. He beheld the loan exactly in the same point of view as his noble friend, and entertained the same sentiments with regard to the subscribers; and whatever the noble Secretary might say respecting the interest being below the price of the market, every one knew that if it was really below the price, it was so in a very trifling degree indeed. He should therefore support the motion of the noble duke.

The question being put, the motion was negatived without a division.

The Bill was read a third time and passed.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, *December 22.*

George Tierney, Esq. took the oaths and his seat for the borough of Southwark.

Mr. Nicholls gave notice, that early after the holidays he should move for leave to bring in a Bill to prevent persons voting at elections of members to serve in parliament, by virtue of collusive, fictitious, and transfers of burgage tenures, &c.

The

The Bill for regulating the trade and commerce of the Cape of Good Hope was read a second time and ordered to be committed to a committee of the whole House the next day.

Mr. *Hobart* brought up the report of the committee of ways and means.

The resolutions were read a first time. A short conversation took place between Mr. *Hussey* and Mr. *Long*, after which the resolutions were read a second time, agreed to, and bills were ordered to be brought in, in pursuance of them.

Mr. Secretary *Dundas* moved for several papers and official documents to be laid before the House relative to the military establishment in India—Ordered.

The Tower Hamlet Militia Bill passed a committee of the whole House, and the report was ordered to be received the next day.

Mr. *Biddulph* said he should make the motion of which he gave notice the preceding day, for the production of some papers relative to the establishment of courts of judicature in India. This he conceived to be matter of general concern, as he thought that the mode of administering justice under the authority of this country in all parts of the globe, ought to be fully known and submitted to the approbation of that House. The motion which he held in his hand, was calculated for that object, and he should be under the necessity of persisting in making it, unless the information which he should receive from the Secretary of State, then in the House, should answer the purpose without it. He understood that that there are at present held in India courts of criminal justice, under the authority of our government, and in which English judges preside. He understood that in some parts of India the criminal laws were made milder than they were formerly, and that in many cases the punishment of death had not been inflicted for crimes which had been forbidden under that penalty in former cases. If the matter was so, he thought the House could not do better than to consider what had been the effect of such mildness; and if they found that the morals of the people were better since the introduction of the mildness, they ought in policy, as well as humanity, to make that mildness a general system in that part of the globe; instead of continuing the old and barbarous system of inflicting death for crimes which could be better prevented without it. With a view of laying important information before the House upon a subject so interesting, and perhaps hereafter of making some regulations upon it,

it, he should move, "That there be laid before the House copies, of extracts, of the correspondence between the Court of Directors of the East-India Company and the Governor-general of Fort William, Bahar, and Orissa, for establishing courts of justice in India, and the directions which were given for procuring such proceedings, &c."

Mr. Secretary *Dundas* said, that the honourable gentleman who introduced this motion, alluded to the subject on a former night; he had observed that the House of Commons could not be so well employed as in forming a code of criminal laws for that country. If he had any idea of that kind in his mind, he must observe to him, that of all the subjects on which that House could be employed, the most pernicious on which they could exercise their authority, would be that of forming a code of criminal jurisdiction over our territories in India. The whole of the executive government there was subject to a board of controul here, which board was subject again to parliament; and if any thing improper was done, parliament would of course exercise its authority. But he must enter his solemn protest against their taking up the matter, and forming in that House all at once, a code of criminal laws for that distant country. If the House could be rash enough to enter upon such a scheme, he could venture to say they would soon find themselves in a labyrinth, out of which it would be difficult, if not impossible for them to extricate themselves. Codes of laws for a whole people were not to be formed at once from notions of dry and abstract propriety; they should be adapted to the feelings and the prejudices of those on whom they were designed to operate, and if the House should take such matter into their discussion without great caution, they might perplex, entangle, and perhaps destroy the government of India. The honourable gentleman, although he might have great general knowledge, was however but a young member of parliament. He should be given to understand, that it was not a practice of the House to grant any papers which any member called for, merely because he chused it; the House generally expected some ground to be stated of the propriety of granting papers, before they granted them. It would therefore be sufficient for him in resisting this motion, to insist that no ground had been laid before the House to shew the necessity of these papers. Besides this objection, there was another which the honourable gentleman had perhaps overlooked; it might be impossible to comply with this motion. All those who had occasion to peruse India documents

documents had been convinced that they do not write in a very laconic style. The whole of the correspondence, which the honourable gentleman asked for, might be so voluminous as to employ for a long time all the clerks of the India Company to copy them; and here again the expence of the measure offered itself to view, and that he would venture to say would not be a mere trifle. There was, however, one reason which made him very desirous of complying as far as possible with the desire of the honourable gentleman for these papers; and that was, that the result would be highly honourable to Lord Cornwallis, who had made some regulations which were just, wise, and salutary. He had abolished the custom of punishing those who were guilty of murder only by a pecuniary fine. This was not making a whole code of new laws, but regulating the punishment for a particular crime, and that upon their own criminal system. It was not their practice only; it was antecedently the practice of all Europe, arising out of the nature of the feudal system, and in this country among the rest, to punish those who had committed murder, only by a pecuniary fine. It had been a common practice in India for persons of high authority, to order an inferior agent to kill a person, and then to pardon the perpetrator of the deed. This Lord Cornwallis had abolished. He had abolished also another very improper practice, which was that of allowing those who were collectors of the revenue to be the judges of the cases of those who appealed against their levies. These were the chief regulations of Lord Cornwallis, and they redounded highly to the honour of that illustrious character. He could not see how it was possible to comply with the motion in its present form, but if the honourable gentleman would withdraw his motion he would undertake upon his honour to produce all the papers which tended to lead to the object of his wishes as to the information upon the subject.

Mr. *Biddulph* said, he would withdraw the present motion, but after Christmas would bring forward another, in a different shape, as he conceived it necessary to consider those laws which persons had weakly and wickedly taken upon themselves to enact.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* objected to the motion being withdrawn, because he wished to exert his parliamentary right of opposing it; and therefore desired it might be put to the test, whether the House thought with the hon. gentleman, that the criminal code in India had been weakly and wickedly drawn up?

Mr.

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* observed, that the charges of the honourable gentleman were not against the Court of Directors only, but against the parliament of Great Britain, which had passed an act for forming a code to judge the natives of India according to European laws.

Sir *W. C. R. Boughton* observed, that England had never interfered in the legislation of India, unless where commerce or revenue were connected. To prove how delicate they had been on the subject of criminal law, he referred to the reports of the committee of secrecy in 1773, and the judicatory report respecting India in 1781. From these it would appear, that there had been no versatility in the British parliament on this head.

Mr. *Nicholls* wished that the motion should be withdrawn. The question was put and negatived.

Mr. *Biddulph* gave notice he should, early after the holidays, bring forward a motion to the same effect as this, although different in form.

Mr. *Hobart* brought up the report of the committee of supply.

The resolutions were all read and agreed to.

Mr. *Hobart* then brought up the report of the Bill to provide for the better payment of navy and victualling bills.

The amendment being read,

Mr. *Hussy* said he thought that articles for which these Bills were to be given, should, if possible be paid for in ready money. If that could not be done, the best way would be to take care that these bills did not go for more than three months in reality. He knew they would be so in appearance; but in reality they would be otherwise. If these Bills were issued immediately for the payment of the goods, all would be well: but he desired to know whether discretion was not to be given to ministers to issue bills, not immediately after the purchase of the articles for which they were to be given, but at a future period? If so, the advantages of making them payable in three months after their issuing would be a very vague one.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* observed, that the honourable gentleman had anticipated this idea when the Bill was under consideration in a former stage of it, when he gave it the only answer he was able to give to it now; which was, that in some cases the Bills should not issue until three months after the contract should have been made. The intention he believed to be well understood by the parties most likely to be interested, and he believed it would be satisfactory to them, and the payment would be, as it was usual, made

made upon services of that description. The bills would not have more than three months to run, and there would be no paper in the market upon the Navy and Victualling service before these bills, so that there would be nothing to affect the discount. From all the information he had been able to collect, he had reason to be satisfied upon this subject.

Mr. *Hussey* said, he understood the right hon. gentleman now upon the subject, although he did not understand him on a former occasion, and there were many other gentlemen in the same condition at that time, for they did not understand him. This bill had not his consent so understanding it; because he was persuaded, that whatever might be the good intentions of the minister, they would be defeated in the market. He could not be able to buy the articles upon the same advantageous terms as if he issued the bills immediately payable at three months, instead of issuing them three months afterwards.

The amendments were then read and agreed to, and the bill was ordered to be engrossed, and read a third time the next day, if then engrossed.

POOR LAWS.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that he meant that day to renew a motion which he had made in the last parliament, for leave to bring in a bill for the better support and maintenance of the poor. He did not intend at present to go at length into any explanation of the bill, except there should be gentlemen who might be desirous in the present stage to be more particularly informed as to the details of the measure. He would only generally remark, that the bill was directed to the same objects which he had last year stated, and which had then experienced the most decided approbation of the House. The subject itself was so extensive, that it could only be properly discussed at a more advanced stage, when the whole of the details were before the House. At present he only proposed, that the bill should be read a first and second time, that it might go into a committee, where the blanks would be filled up, and the bill printed before the holidays, in order that during the interval of parliament it might be circulated in the country, and undergo the most serious and mature investigation. He should, therefore, at present, move, "That leave be given to bring in a bill for the better support and maintenance of the poor."—There was no subject which more deserved the attention of the

House, or which required a more careful and deliberate consideration.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, he certainly agreed that there was no subject more deserving of the attention of the House, or which more demanded their most diligent and serious investigation. He hoped, however, that the right hon. gentleman would persevere in maturing his system, as he had taken the subject out of the hands of an hon. friend of his (Mr. Whitbread), who would have prosecuted it, if not with equal ability, yet with equal zeal, and perhaps with a greater degree of industry. He wished that the right hon. gentleman had at least entered into a short explanation of the particulars of the plan which he proposed to bring forward. When he talked of the approbation given to the objects of the bill, he ought to have recollected that sanction had been given in a former Parliament. He would, however, when the subject was brought forward in detail, pay it the closest attention, and he trusted that it would be attended with the utmost advantage to the class of the community for whose interests it was professedly brought forward.

M^r *Jolliffe* said, that as the subject was of infinite importance, and required the most deliberate investigation, he hoped that the bill would not be brought into a committee, previous to the Christmas recess.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, in reply to Mr. *Sheridan*, said that he certainly had not taken the motion out of the hands of the hon. member alluded to, because his motion was of a different nature. The object of that hon. gentleman's motion was to interfere with the price of labour, and fix the *minimum* of wages, and it had been a long established and well founded principle, that it was extremely impolitic to controul the reward of labour by any positive law. The present plan was so far different, that although indeed it bore a reference to the same subject, it proceeded upon a larger scale, and imposed no arbitrary regulation upon the price of labour, which would very prudently be left to find its own level. In regard to the diligence with which the hon. gentleman might have prosecuted the plan, he had only to say, that it was very possible he might have proceeded with less interruption, but certainly not with more zeal. For his own part, he was free to declare, that he had not neglected the subject since he first undertook it; to the truth of which declaration he could bring many gentlemen to bear witness. He had some proof, however, of his perseverance in the paper

per which he held in his hand, for that paper contained the heads of the bill as he had stated them to the last Parliament; it was printed about that time, and had been circulated throughout the kingdom among such gentlemen as were able, either from their information on the subject, from enquiry, or from their local knowledge to furnish him with the advantage of their documents, and such intelligence as they were able to collect in the interval from others. If he were to acknowledge that he had not been diligent during the long interval which had elapsed, he ought to do it with shame, because he had always considered the subject as one of the most important that could ever occupy a man's attention, and one that ought not to depend upon the opinions or the information of one person only, but upon the general knowledge and investigation of all who chose to make it matter of enquiry. For these reasons he chose to reserve his explanation until gentlemen by reading the bill, and deliberating upon it, should be better qualified to judge of its advantages, and follow him through the details. In addition to the speeches which he was willing to make, though he regretted the obtrusion of himself so often, and so long upon the time and patience of the House, he thought it particularly hard that gentlemen should press him for speeches which he did not wish to make, especially when those gentlemen were in the habit of complaining of his arguments. But as he had said before, the reason why he did not enter into any detail at present, was because he wished to give gentlemen every possible advantage, and because the explanation would be full as well hereafter, if not better, than it could be then. He could not therefore think that he had acted unfairly, by abstaining from any superfluous expressions, while it was his most earnest desire to give every gentleman an opportunity of deliberately and maturely examining his plan, in order to enable them to discuss its merits with more clearness and precision.

Mr. *Sheridan* reminded the right hon. gentleman that the bill which his hon. friend (Mr. Whitbread) moved for leave to bring in, referred not to a detached measure which he had in view, but was a part of an extensive plan which he then had in agitation, if the House had permitted him to prosecute it.

Mr. *Martin* expressed his satisfaction at finding the Chancellor of the Exchequer in earnest in the business, and he had no doubt that a plan formed by his great abilities, with the

benevolent design of granting relief to the labouring poor, would meet the unanimous support of the House.

SUPPLEMENTAL MILITIA.

The report of the amended bill for augmenting the militia was taken into farther consideration, and the different amendments were agreed to by the House.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* brought up a clause, providing that no person who shall be ballotted for the supplemental militia, shall be liable to serve in the regular militia, which was agreed to.

Mr. *Wilberforce* brought up a clause, providing that the words, "I swear that I am a protestant," shall be erased from the form of oath administered to those who shall be ballotted to serve in the supplemental militia.

Mr. *Sheridan* observed, that the hint had been taken from him, though when he made a proposition to this effect it was said to be ill-timed, because it came from that side of the House; but now it appeared to come with a peculiar good grace from the other side, since the honourable gentleman had adopted it, for it was received without any opposition. He merely mentioned this to mark the difference of opinions which the right honourable gentleman opposite entertained upon the same subject according to the quarter from whence it came. He wished to know whether the catholics were balloted for? He understood their names were not in the lists, and since his hints at any rate produced the effect he wished for, he should now renew the notice he had formerly given, of bringing forward, after the recess, a general scheme on the same principle.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he had given no opinion before upon the general propriety of the honourable gentleman's proposition; he had only wished him to defer the consideration of it till there should be an opportunity for discussing it at more leisure. His honourable friend (Mr. *Wilberforce*) had availed himself of that opportunity; but still the honourable gentleman opposite was not likely to know whether he would oppose the introduction of the clause or not, because the motion had been made so recently. He did, however, mean to consent to the introduction of the clause, and he would candidly tell the honourable gentleman why. His reason for consenting to the introduction of the clause now was, because he thought it a practical hardship upon those persons who, on account of their religious tenets, would be otherwise denied the choice of serving,

serving, if they wished to do so, and must be consequently forced to pay for the provision of a substitute. This was the best proof also that the catholics were balloted for since they could not else be made to pay; and in regard to the declaration of the honourable gentleman that the hints had been taken from him, he could hardly suppose that that would be imputed to him as a matter of blame, when the honourable gentleman so repeatedly complained of the total discomfiture of the suggestions from that side of the House. It was now pretty evident he thought, that whenever those suggestions appeared practicable, and likely to produce a good effect, that he was always ready to acquiesce.

The clause was then read, and made part of the Bill.

Mr. *Burdon* moved for leave to introduce a clause for the payment of 4l. to every volunteer from the poor rates.

The *Speaker* informed the House that as this was a money clause with a specific sum, the whole Bill must be recommit- ted on its introduction; or if the specific sum were left out the clause must be committed. He therefore suggested, whether the better mode would not be to leave a blank in the clause, and have the clause committed on the third reading of the Bill.

The clause of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was agreed to, and the Bill was ordered to be read a third time the next day, if then engrossed.

A message was received from the Lords, acquainting the House that their Lordships had agreed to the loan Bill without an amendment.

INLAND NAVIGATION DUTY.

Mr. *Sheridan* wished to ask the right honourable gentleman one question; since he had taken the hint from him respecting the impropriety and impracticability of the tax on gamekeepers, which he understood was now altogether abandoned, he wished to know whether the right honourable gentleman meant to persevere in the tax on inland navigation as many persons had made enquiries upon that subject? By postponing the commitment of that Bill to February, he trusted the right honourable gentleman had profited from his hint on that subject also, for he believed the prosecution of it would be severe, partial and oppressive, if not wholly impracticable. He desired to know, however, whether it was given up or not?

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that he had no doubt whatever of the propriety of a tax upon inland navigation,
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and that was his motive for imposing it. If his opinion were erroneous, he should have no difficulty to change it on conviction; but it required more consideration to convince him of the impropriety: and for what reason, he trusted that the honourable gentleman would admit the effect of the delay to be fair and just. At present, he saw no reason for abandoning the Bill, and only wished the interval to be employed in its discussion. He should therefore be glad if the accurate, *critical* talents of the honourable gentleman would assist him to make the tax more practicable and more permanent.

The report of the committee on the amended Cavalry Bill was taken into farther consideration, and the different amendments agreed to by the House.

Mr. *Wilberforce* brought up a clause for amending the words of the oath, similar to that which he proposed upon the former Bill, which was adopted.

The Bill was ordered to be read a third time the next day, if then engrossed. The County Quota Bill was reported, and ordered to be read a third time the next day. The other orders of the day being disposed of, the House adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, *Dec. 23.*

The Royal Assent was given by commission to the Loan Bill, the Test Act Indemnity bill, the bill permitting the importation of foreign goods in certain cases in neutral bottoms, and several private bills.—The Commissioners were the Lord Chancellor, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Earl Spencer.

Read the bills on the table and adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, *December 23.*

The *Speaker*, accompanied by several members of the House, attended in the House of Lords to hear the Royal Assent by Commission read.

The bill for regulating the trade to the Cape of Good Hope, passed through a committee of the whole House, and the report was received.

In a committee of supply,

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* moved, that a sum not exceeding 600,000*l.* be granted to his Majesty for the accommodation of the merchants trading to the islands of Grenada and St. Vincent. Resolved.

Also, that there be granted to his Majesty a sum not exceeding 1,054,000*l.* to enable his Majesty to repay the sums that have been issued by the Bank for the publick service of 1795. Resolved.

Mr. *Steele* moved, that there be granted to his Majesty a sum, not exceeding 177,000*l.* for defraying the expence of the pay and clothing of the militia in 1795. Resolved.

The House being resumed, the committee of ways and means was deferred till Monday.

The bill for the more speedy payment of Navy, Victualling, and Transport bills, that may be issued in future, was read a third time and passed.

The amended Supplemental Militia bill, was read a third time.

Mr. *Jadiffe* entered his protest against the passing of the bill, as being impossible to be executed, and admitting the possibility of putting it in execution, as extremely dangerous in its tendency.

The bill was passed.

The amended cavalry bill was read a third time.

Mr. Alderman *Lushington* wished that the bill should not be passed till the next day, when he meant to propose a clause to exempt postmasters who let out horses for hire, from the operation of the bill, because they paid such heavy taxes already to Government.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* replied, that he had no objection to postpone the passing of the bill, but he was by no means clear that postmasters should be exempted from its operation, considering it to be as fair that it should fall upon those who kept horses for profit, as upon those who kept horses for convenience.

A number of clauses were brought up by way of riders to the bill, and the debate upon the last was adjourned till the next day, to give Mr. *Lushington* an opportunity of preparing his clause.

The third reading of the County Quota bill was deferred till the next day.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

SATURDAY, Dec. 24.

The several Tax Bills upon their Lordships table passed Committees of the whole House, and will be read a third time on Monday.

Received several Bills from the Commons, which were read a first time.

The *Earl of Moira* said, he had presented to their Lordships several petitions on behalf of unfortunate debtors confined for debt in different prisons in the kingdom. He had many more to present. He was convinced that justice and policy would require that their Lordships should take the subject matter of these petitions in substance into consideration. He should only now move, "that the petitions he had to present be read *pro forma*, giving notice that early after the holidays he should have a proposition to make to their Lordships upon the matter. He was aware there was much abuse of the law of debtor and creditor; but he did not take the whole of his ideas upon that subject from the mere allegations in these petitions, nor from the particular hardships of any individual case, although he might allude to the hardships of individual cases, to illustrate the general principle which he thought ought to guide the House ultimately upon the subject. The Earl concluded with moving, that the several petitions which he had to present from the debtors of the King's Bench, and a great number of other prisons, be read, for the purpose he had already mentioned.

They were all read accordingly, and ordered to be laid on their Lordships table.

Lord *Grenville* then said, that perhaps it was not, speaking strictly, quite regular for him to do that which he was about doing, namely, to inform their Lordships, that it was very probable he should be commanded by his Majesty to deliver, on Monday next, a message to their Lordships, on the sudden and abrupt termination of the negociation, between his majesty and the Directory of the French Republick: but the special circumstances of the case required it, and that would excuse the irregularity. He therefore gave notice, that on Monday he should deliver a message from the Throne, on that important subject.

Adjourned.

HOUSE

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

SATURDAY, *December 24.*

The Bill for the regulation of the Militia in the Tower Hamlet, and the Bill for excepting the Cape of Good Hope from the navigation laws, were read a third time and passed.

The explanatory Supplementary Cavalry Bill, and the County Quota Bill, after receiving several clauses, which were made part of the Bills, were read a third time, with their amendments, and passed.

The Grenada Bill was ordered to be reported on Monday.

Accounts ordered of returns from General Abercrombie, and of recruits sent to India.

Report of the Resolutions of the Committee of Supply of Friday, was brought up and agreed to.

Marybone Burying Ground, and Ashcott Inclosure petitions, reported, and bills ordered.

TREASONABLE AND SEDITIOUS MEETINGS BILLS.

General *Tarleton* rose and said, Sir, I am authorised by a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox), who is gone out of town, to move in his absence, that the motion which he had given notice to bring forward in the month of February next, may be postponed for a few days. When the right honourable gentleman gave the notice of the motion he intended to bring forward, it was understood that parliament would adjourn for the Christmas recess to the 8th or 9th of February next; but since the House has of necessity been detained longer before its adjournment than was formerly expected, it is possible that the recess may also be continued to a later period, by which means the early effect of the motion of my right honourable friend would be precluded. I therefore beg leave to give notice, that the motion for the repeal of the Bills enacted for the better security of his Majesty's person and government, and for the prevention of treasonable and seditious meetings will be transferred from the 13th of February to the 20th of the same month.

NEGOCIATION FOR PEACE.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, no reason has occurred to me, Sir, why the recess should be continued later than the

time already fixed for the re-meeting of parliament, which, as the honourable general has correctly understood, will be about the 8th or 9th of February next; and therefore I conceive that there will be abundance of time for the right honourable gentleman either to bring forward the motion of which he has already given notice, or to postpone the notice to a day that may be more convenient. In the mean time, Sir, permit me to avail myself of this opportunity to give an intimation to the House that I shall probably bring down a communication from his Majesty on Monday relative to an event, which has turned out contrary to the expectation of his Majesty's ministers and the general wish of the community. The House will have no difficulty in anticipating that I allude to the failure of the negociation with the enemy entrusted to Lord Malmesbury; but here I must request the House not to anticipate the contents of his Majesty's communication, as it will be accompanied with a multiplicity of very important papers which the House will be able to discuss with more advantage if those papers be previously printed. For these reasons the House, I trust, will deem it proper to postpone the consideration of his Majesty's message to a period beyond the usual time allotted for taking messages from the Throne into consideration. I regret exceedingly that the suddenness of this unexpected event should have occurred at a time when the nature of circumstances will not allow of a full attendance; but in order to procure as full an attendance as possible, and in order also to assist gentlemen with the ablest means of discussing the subject of the message, I mean to lay the communication before the House, and to ground no other motion at that time upon it than to have the papers printed, and move that they be taken into consideration on the Thursday following. That is the day when the House will probably think fit to enter into the discussion of the failure of the negociation; but that, however, is a subject for the future consideration of the House. At all events I think the message from his Majesty may be expected on Monday, and that it will not be taken into consideration earlier than Thursday.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, Mr. Speaker, The right honourable gentleman says, that he regrets exceedingly that he shall not have a full attendance to take this very important business into consideration on Monday, and I think with him so far that the failure of the negociation is of such importance, that without a full attendance it ought not to be taken into consideration at all. It appears indispensibly necessary to inform

inform the House of the causes of the failure in the negotiation to which the right honourable gentleman has alluded, and unless some hint should be thrown out by his Majesty's ministers of the nature of the failure, so as to leave the minds of gentlemen easy about it, I think it will be little satisfaction to the House, and still less to the publick, to adjourn as if no such event had taken place. It would be too much for me, Sir, to assume that every thing has been done on the part of his Majesty's ministers to prevent the carrying the negotiation into effect, but it is certainly reasonable for me to assume that the sufficiency of the measures employed for that purpose admit of some doubt and apprehension, and doing so become fit matter of discussion. It will not be decorous therefore, nor consist with the duties of the House, to separate with as little concern as if no such event had happened, as the total failure of a negotiation, on which our hopes, our happiness, our lives, our laws, our liberty, and property depended. For these reasons it is my intention, Sir, to make a motion for a call of the House on Monday next.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* in reply said, as to the question, Sir, whether a call of the House may be necessary for the full discussion of his Majesty's message or not, it appears in a great degree to depend upon the light in which the honourable gentleman may be pleased to view it. The nature of the circumstance, however does not appear to me, Sir, such as cannot well be understood by the House at present, without the aid of some communication, and since there is at present no communication of an authoritative and satisfactory nature, I cannot decide on the result; but so far I must say, that I see no necessity whatever for superseding the adjournment. In the mean time, I must confess I think it wrong in the hon. gentleman to throw out any conjecture or surmise upon the issue of the event in question, since no sort of observation should, in my opinion, be hazarded upon it until his Majesty's communication shall have been received. I hope therefore that nothing will be pressed upon the subject of the papers relating to the causes of the failure, or to the nature of the negotiation, until his Majesty's message comes before the House, because it would not only be irregular, but imprudent in me to state any thing to the House that might be construed into an appearance of anticipating his Majesty, and thereby shewing disrespect. When the papers come before the House, it will be time to decide upon it. Gentlemen will then have an opportunity of discussing

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the propriety of the measures which have been adopted, and which led to the failure of the negotiation, and they will then be better able also to judge what opinion ought to be formed of the conduct of his Majesty's ministers concerning the plans they have pursued.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, In my opinion Sir, something must interfere to prevent our separation in the usual mode. I do not see why the right honourable gentleman should not accede to my proposition, but since he desires it, I will not press the call of the House till Monday.

The bill for affording relief to the merchants of Grenada was committed, and the report ordered to be made on Monday.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, Mr. Speaker, as I am informed the right honourable gentleman does not mean to move any thing on presenting the communication, and as I am ready to admit that we can have a fuller view of the subject with the printed papers in our hands, I shall defer my motion for the call of the House till Thursday. Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, Dec. 26.

The Duke of *Atbol* took his seat.

Lord *Grenville* brought down a message from the King, which was as follows :

GEORGE R.

It is with the utmost concern that his Majesty acquaints the House of Lords, that his earnest endeavours to effect the restoration of peace have been unhappily frustrated, and that the negotiation, in which he was engaged, has been abruptly broken off by the peremptory refusal of the French Government to treat, except upon a basis evidently inadmissible, and by their having in consequence required his Majesty's Plenipotentiary to quit Paris within 48 hours.

His Majesty has directed the several memorials and papers which have been exchanged in the course of the late discussion, and the account transmitted to his Majesty of its final result, to be laid before the House.

From these papers his Majesty trusts, it will be proved to the whole world that his conduct has been guided by a sincere desire to effect the restoration of peace on principles suited to the relative situation of the Belligerent powers, and essential for the permanent interests of this kingdom, and the general security of Europe : whilst his enemies have advanced pretensions at once inconsistent with those objects, unsupported even on the grounds on which they were professed to rest, and repugnant both to the system established by repeated treaties, and to the principles and practice which have hitherto regulated the intercourse of independent nations.

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In this situation, his Majesty has the consolation of reflecting, that the continuance of the calamities of war can be imputed only to the unjust and exorbitant views of his enemies ; and his Majesty, looking forward with anxiety to the moment when they may be disposed to act on different principles, places in the mean time the fullest reliance, under the protection of Providence, on the wisdom and firmness of his parliament, on the tried valour of his forces by sea and land, and on the zeal, public spirit, and resources of his kingdoms, for vigorous and effectual support in the prosecution of a contest, which it does not depend on his Majesty to terminate, and which involves in it the security and permanent interests of this country, and of Europe.

The message being read,

Lord *Grenville* said, that he had no observations to make upon the present occasion. He had only to acquaint the House, that the papers referred to in his Majesty's message were now preparing, and he hoped to be able to lay them on the table the next day. In the mean time he moved, " That his Majesty's message be taken into consideration on Thursday next."

The *Duke of Bedford* disavowed any the smallest intention of going into a discussion of his Majesty's message at present, because he was not in possession of the necessary information, and likewise, because they would have an opportunity of discussing it regularly on a future day. But he submitted to the noble Secretary, whether upon a question of so much importance, and a question of greater importance could not well be conceived, it would not be desirable to have as full an attendance as possible, and as this could not be expected so early as Thursday, whether it would not be proper to defer the discussion till this day se'nnight?

Lord *Grenville* said in reply, that he was as much convinced of the importance of the subject as the noble Duke, or any Lord in the House. He was also extremely anxious that there should be a full attendance, but the question lay in a very narrow compass, and would turn upon a single point ; besides he considered it of such infinite moment that parliament should express an early and decided opinion upon the business, that he could not at present consent to defer the discussion longer than Thursday. He had no doubt that when the papers came to be examined, many of which were already perfectly well known, their Lordships would have little difficulty in coming to a decision, but if it should turn out otherwise, the farther consideration of them might then be adjourned to a future day.

The *Duke of Bedford* declared that he had no motive in wishing for the delay but that of procuring a full attendance,
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and a fair discussion of a subject of so great magnitude as that to which his Majesty's message referred. And if the consideration of it took place on Thursday, he did not see how this was possible, as a great number of the Lords, in the idea that there would be no publick business before the holidays, had gone out of town, and except expresses were to be sent after them all over the country, they could not be expected to be present on so early a day. He had no objections, for the sake of form, to address his Majesty, immediately or the next day, but he hoped that a decision upon a question of so much national importance as that which was involved in the history of the negotiation, would not be passed without full and mature deliberation. At all events he trusted that if there was not a full attendance on Thursday that the discussion would then be put off.

Lord *Grenville* explained. Such was his opinion of the importance of parliament coming to an early decision upon the subject, that he was not aware of any possible consideration which could induce him to agree to postpone the consideration of his Majesty's message later than Thursday.

The *Duke of Bedford* professed to have had no intention of misconstruing any thing that fell from the noble Secretary. And now that the noble Secretary had explicitly declared his sentiments, his Grace said that he would not conceal his opinion, that there were no circumstances which could justify the taking of his Majesty's message into consideration on so early a day. It was for their Lordships to decide, whether they were to pass over so important a subject with a silent vote, or whether they were to investigate it with that impartiality, and at the same time with that severity, which became them as a branch of the British legislature. He moved that instead of Thursday the word Monday next shall be substituted.

The question being put upon the Duke of Bedford's amendment, it was negatived without a division.

The original motion was then put and carried.

The Bills upon the table passed through their several stages, after which the House adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, Dec. 26.

Mr. Bright's Divorce Bill passed a committee of the whole House.

Mr.

Mr. *William Dundas* presented a petition from Alexander Morris, stating that the petitioner had been adjudged guilty of disobedience to the order of the House, whereupon he was apprehended and committed to Newgate, and had remained there ever since, whereby his health was much impaired and his affairs were deranged; also stating his sorrow what had happened, and praying to be released from his for confinement.

The petition being read,

Mr. *William Dundas* said, he hoped that in consideration of the circumstances stated in the petition, the prayer of it was not a presumptuous appeal to the mercy of the House, he therefore moved, "That Alexander Morris be brought to the bar of the House the next day, in order to be discharged."

Mr. *Grey* said, that from the circumstances of the case he had no objection to this motion. He hoped that in future no person would be disobedient to the orders of that House. He had given notice of a motion to order the attendance of other persons, whose conduct it was much more material for the House to investigate, than that of the present petitioner; he meant those who had advised him to disobey the orders of the committee. But he did not know where these persons now are, and he did not wish to pursue them vindictively; he hoped that all the circumstances that had attended this case, were such as to make a proper impression, so that the leniency of the House might be extended to this petitioner, without pursuing the matter any further.

The question was put and carried.

A message from the Lords, informed the House, that their Lordships had agreed to the Auction, the Postage, the Stage Coach, and the Scotch Distillery new Duty Bills, without any amendment.

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* brought from his Majesty, a message which was the same in substance as that delivered to the House of Lords by Lord Grenville.

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* said, that when notice was given in the House by his right honourable friend, of an intention in his Majesty to send to the House a message that day, it was intended to lay before the House at the same time the various papers which related to the subject; but on further consideration of the matter, it was deemed advisable that they should be presented to the House the next day; this, instead of retarding the consideration of the subject, would very much facilitate it; they had been arranged in such a manner, that a more general access would be had to them by these

these means, than if they had been laid upon the table then. It was adviseable that time should be taken to peruse and examine these documents, and therefore he should move, "That his Majesty's gracious message be taken into consideration on Thursday next."

Mr. Grey said, he did not rise to anticipate the length of discussion which this message would require, but as the right honourable gentleman had proposed to take it into consideration on Thursday, he would suggest to him, that seeing the great importance of the subject, at a time when there was so little expectation of it, and when parliament was about to adjourn, whether it would not be better to allow a little further time than Thursday. Undoubtedly every member of Parliament ought to attend his duty at all times, and yet there ought to be allowed some relaxation of that duty; under that idea many members had gone into the country, not having any apprehension that such important concerns would come before the House at this period. They had not imagined that the negotiation would have come to so sudden and melancholy a conclusion, as had been announced that day from his Majesty. He therefore hoped that his Majesty's ministers would consent to a short delay in the time for considering this momentous affair. Not that he had hopes a short time would procure a full attendance in the House, but it should be such as to enable members to come up from parts that were not very distant, so as to have a fuller attendance than could be expected on Thursday. A few days delay would afford to the House very considerable advantage. He should therefore propose, that the consideration of this message should be postponed to Monday. Little or no disadvantage could arise by that short delay. He meant nothing disrespectful to his Majesty in what he was proposing, but he really felt that it was necessary to allow the time he asked to consider this matter. When the right honourable gentleman gave notice of the message which they had heard, he stated that the papers which were referred to would accompany that message, and which, he said, would contain proof that ministers had done every thing in their power to procure peace, and that the breaking off the negotiation, as now stated from his Majesty, was owing to the unreasonable ambition of the Directory of France. These papers might have been printed between that time and this, and delivered to the members at the door of the House; because, in such a case, it would not be necessary to wait for the formal order of the House, that they be printed. They should have

have been brought to the House that day at all events, and they might have been read by the Clerk at the table. So that although they might have been of an extensive nature, the members present might have some information of their contents. This was perhaps more important than any thing that ever occurred in that House, and therefore ought to be most deliberately considered. He might perhaps call this a renewal of war; certainly a continuance of war, involving a dreadful waste of blood and treasure. Under a feeling of its importance, the necessity of having time to deliberate upon it, and for other reasons, he should move an amendment, by leaving out the word "Thursday," and inserting "Monday next."

The amendment being put,

Mr. Secretary *Dundas* said it was impossible for him to concur in the proposed amendment. He agreed that there should be a relaxation from the duties of that House, but the same reason which would induce the House to grant it, led them to wish that gentlemen should not be unnecessarily detained. He should, however, put that out of view upon the present occasion, because points more pressing were before the House: It was very seldom indeed that a message from his Majesty had been delayed in its consideration more than a day; it was usual to give it precedence of all other business, and to consider it the next day after it was received. Since such was the practice, he was confident the House would not delay this matter for a single hour more than was indispensably necessary.

The hon. gentleman had said, he wished to hear the papers referred to read at the table of the House that night; he owned he thought that if the papers had been brought to the House before they were printed and read, as the hon. gentleman wished, that circumstance would have retarded the desired information; because it would have retarded the printing, whereas, by the mode which ministers had adopted, the papers would be put into the hands of the members the next day. It did not occur to him that there was any necessity for the present amendment; the consideration of the whole message might stand for Thursday. If the hon. gentleman after perusing all the papers, should be of opinion on Thursday, that further time was necessary to consider the message, he might propose merely to thank his Majesty for his gracious communication, and move to defer the consideration of it to any future day to which the House would assent, if it thought itself imperfectly informed upon the matter; for his own

these means, than if they had been laid upon the table then. It was adviseable that time should be taken to peruse and examine these documents, and therefore he should move, "That his Majesty's gracious message be taken into consideration on Thursday next."

Mr. Grey said, he did not rise to anticipate the length of discussion which this message would require, but as the right honourable gentleman had proposed to take it into consideration on Thursday, he would suggest to him, that seeing the great importance of the subject, at a time when there was so little expectation of it, and when parliament was about to adjourn, whether it would not be better to allow a little further time than Thursday. Undoubtedly every member of Parliament ought to attend his duty at all times, and yet there ought to be allowed some relaxation of that duty; under that idea many members had gone into the country, not having any apprehension that such important concerns would come before the House at this period. They had not imagined that the negotiation would have come to so sudden and melancholy a conclusion, as had been announced that day from his Majesty. He therefore hoped that his Majesty's ministers would consent to a short delay in the time for considering this momentous affair. Not that he had hopes a short time would procure a full attendance in the House, but it should be such as to enable members to come up from parts that were not very distant, so as to have a fuller attendance than could be expected on Thursday. A few days delay would afford to the House very considerable advantage. He should therefore propose, that the consideration of this message should be postponed to Monday. Little or no disadvantage could arise by that short delay. He meant nothing disrespectful to his Majesty in what he was proposing, but he really felt that it was necessary to allow the time he asked to consider this matter. When the right honourable gentleman gave notice of the message which they had heard, he stated that the papers which were referred to would accompany that message, and which, he said, would contain proof that ministers had done every thing in their power to procure peace, and that the breaking off the negotiation, as now stated from his Majesty, was owing to the unreasonable ambition of the Directory of France. These papers might have been printed between that time and this, and delivered to the members at the door of the House; because, in such a case, it would not be necessary to wait for the formal order of the House, that they be printed. They should have

have been brought to the House that day at all events, and they might have been read by the Clerk at the table. So that although they might have been of an extensive nature, the members present might have some information of their contents. This was perhaps more important than any thing that ever occurred in that House, and therefore ought to be most deliberately considered. He might perhaps call this a renewal of war; certainly a continuance of war, involving a dreadful waste of blood and treasure. Under a feeling of its importance, the necessity of having time to deliberate upon it, and for other reasons, he should move an amendment, by leaving out the word "Thursday," and inserting "Monday next."

The amendment being put,

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part, he was not aware that any gentleman would then think any further delay necessary. Sure he was that the House would not consent to any delay that was not necessary; he was persuaded that the House would shew a disposition which would manifest that they were desirous of coming without delay to a point so important; that they would shew they were clear, prompt and determined upon it: this was essential to be known speedily, not only in this country, but also all over Europe, and clearly understood by all nations. Upon these grounds he thought it his duty to oppose the amendment.

Mr. *Whitebread* said the convenience of the members of the House was but a secondary consideration. As to the observation of the right hon. gentleman, that it was competent to his honourable friend to move on Thursday a mere vote of thanks to his Majesty for his gracious communication, it was certainly true, but it was unnecessary; if that be to be done, then, it might be done that instant, and the House could delay the rest until they had further consulted. But the right honourable gentleman seemed now to hint a desire that the House should on Thursday, without further pause, declare to this country and to Europe, its opinion upon the whole of this most important question, to whom it was owing that the negotiation is at an end. He begged it to be remembered, that the question was the most momentous that was ever agitated in parliament; a considerable number of the members of that House were at a great distance from town and it would be impossible for them to arrive on Thursday. On these grounds he thought it his duty to concur in the amendment.

Mr. *Grey* said, he should have no objection to voting thanks for his Majesty's gracious communication immediately. But here the House was to be called upon to pronounce on the most momentous subject that ever was agitated in that House. He agreed that dispatch and determination were good; but when blood and treasure were to be so embarked, he thought that coolness and deliberation were better.

Mr. *Nicholls* saw no reason why the amendment should not be adopted, nor did he see any thing that could be more respectful to his Majesty than deliberation.

The question was then put, and the amendment was negatived, and the original motion put and carried.

Adjourned.

HOUSE

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, *December 27.*

Heard counsel in the Scotch Appeal. The Earl of Dundonald appellant, and Bushby and others respondents. Their Lordships affirmed the decree of the court of sessions with 50*l.* costs.

The Bills on the table were read in their several stages.

The Bill for extending the time of the payment of the instalments on the loan, by the East-India Company, was brought up from the Commons and read a first time.

Lord *Grenville* informed their Lordships that the papers, which were announced in his Majesty's message of the preceding day, could not possibly be ready, as was intended, to lay on the table that day. He hoped to be able to present them to their Lordships the next day. He therefore moved, that his Majesty's message be taken into consideration on Friday next, instead of Thursday, and that their Lordships be summoned for the same purpose. Ordered, that the Lords be summoned for Friday, instead of Thursday.

Lord *Grenville* then said, he had in his hand a Declaration of his Majesty, containing all the causes of breaking off the negociation for peace. His Lordship moved that the same might lie on the table. Ordered that the Declaration do lie on the table for the perusal of their Lordships.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, *December 27.*

A new writ was ordered for a member to serve in parliament for the county of Derby, in the room of Lord John Cavendish, deceased.

A new writ was ordered for the town of Derby, in the room of Lord Henry Augustus Cavendish, who hath accepted of the Chiltern Hundreds.

A new writ was ordered for Denbigh, in the room of Richard Middleton, Esq. deceased.

The order of the day for Alexander Morris to be brought to the Bar, in order to be discharged, being moved, he was ordered to be brought to the Bar.

Alexander Morris being accordingly brought to the Bar, the Speaker addressed him in substance as follows:—"Alexander Morris, you are now brought up in consequence of an

order of the House made upon the application of your petition in which you express your contrition for the offence of which you have been guilty; an offence which in its nature is an outrage against the dignity and privileges of this House, and tends to embarrass and disappoint the administration of its justice. The measures which have been adopted in consequence of your proceeding, will be sufficient to evince to you, and to others (if there are any, who are so ignorant as to require such an admonition), that the House of Commons possesses full, ample, and complete means of vindicating its own dignity, and of punishing those who venture to set its privileges at defiance. Having already experienced the weight of the authority of the House, which you rashly thought proper to disregard, you are now about to experience its lenity. I have therefore to inform you, that it is the pleasure of the House that you should be discharged out of custody, and you are therefore discharged, paying your fines."

Alexander Morris then withdrew.

Colonel *Wood* moved, That there be laid before the House a copy of the arrangements sent out to India in January last, for the education of military officers in the engineers.

The Bill for allowing farther time for the payment of instalments upon the loan, was read a third time and passed.

HIS MAJESTY'S DECLARATION.

Mr. *Canning* brought up the Declaration of his Majesty, dated Westminster, 27th of December, 1796.

Mr. *Grey* remarked that it did not appear from the title, of what description that Declaration was. He therefore moved to have it read.

The clerk then read it*.

It was ordered to be laid upon the table for the perusal of the members of that House.

Mr. *Canning* informed the House, that notwithstanding the assurances which had been given to the House by his Majesty's ministers of laying certain papers upon the table for the information of the House respecting the late negotiation with France, and notwithstanding the utmost diligence had been used to get them ready, it was found absolutely impossible to prepare them so early. The House, however, might rely with certainty on having them the next day. He therefore moved to have the order of the day for taking his

* Vide Appendix.

Majesty's message into consideration on Thursday next discharged for Friday.

Mr. Grey said, that he had repeatedly urged the request for some interval of delay, in order that the House should have an opportunity of coming to a decision upon a matter of so much importance, after the most mature deliberation. After the confident manner in which it had the preceding day, and on a previous occasion, been stated, that the papers necessary to enable gentlemen to form their judgment would be ready for delivery that day, the House might now entertain some doubt whether they would be laid upon the table in time to allow them to prepare for the discussion. The honourable gentleman had stated, that the utmost diligence had been used to have these papers ready to be laid before the House, but though he did not mean to call in question what the honourable gentleman personally asserted, the Declaration in his hand induced him to think that they might have been ready to be laid before the House sooner. The Declaration referred to the papers which were expected, and must have been composed from, and it had been printed that morning, he therefore could not help thinking that they might have been printed also. In the Declaration the steps which had been taken in conjunction with the Emperor were referred to, and he begged leave to ask the honourable gentleman a question at once for information, and to demonstrate how necessary it was to have the papers, and to reflect upon them maturely before they were made the foundation of any opinion. He would ask, therefore, Whether there was any communication to be made of documents to prove the circumstance of the measures which had been taken in co-operation with the Emperor, a matter of which at present he professed himself utterly ignorant? It might be necessary therefore to have more information than it was intended to communicate to the House. Till they had the documents upon which it was founded, and to which it referred, it was impossible for the House to come to any resolution upon the Declaration. He insisted that there ought to be some greater delay allowed than was at present proposed. He did not wish that the House should delay to testify their respect to his Majesty, and they might therefore thank him for his most gracious communication, but when they were called to pronounce a decision which involved the lives and happiness of their fellow subjects, it was decent and proper to require time for deliberation. He would propose the amendment he had proposed the preceding day. Though there might be many gentlemen

gentlemen desirous of being present upon so important an occasion, and whom the shortness of the period allowed would disappoint, he only asked for two short days, and therefore he did not mean to move for a later day than Monday, and when the lives, the interest, and the happiness of the people of this country were concerned in the determination they were to pronounce, he hoped the House would not refuse to grant so short an interval for reflection.

Mr. *Canning* said, as he had some share in the mechanical part of the arrangement and preparation of the papers which were to be produced, it would be improper for him to say any thing more with regard to the diligence which had been employed; the papers would speak for themselves. But he would appeal to the candour of gentlemen, whether those who had this management might not, upon a first view, have been mistaken in their estimate of the time that would be necessary. It had been supposed that they could have been prepared in time to be laid before the House that day, and he was not sure but they might be ready in an hour, yet it would not have been respectful to the House to have kept them upon this supposition, and it was, therefore, thought proper to postpone the consideration of the message till Friday, to allow the same time for reflection and deliberation. With regard to the contents of the papers he could not answer. Had the right honourable, Secretary of State and Chancellor of the Exchequer, confined by indisposition, been present, they might have been able to answer the right hon. gentleman's questions. If, however, when the papers were laid before the House, they appeared to be incompetent to enable gentlemen to form an opinion, they might then have an opportunity of moving for such other documents as might be deemed proper. As those higher in office, and better qualified to give the House any information upon the subject were absent, he would ask the honourable gentleman, with that candour which was usually practised by one gentleman to another, to defer any motion till he saw the papers, when he might have an opportunity to move for whatever he judged necessary.

The *Master of the Rolls* considered the amendment as a continuance of last night's debate. If Thursday was a proper day for considering the message, when the papers were to be laid before the House on Tuesday, Friday was with equal propriety substituted when the House was to be furnished with the papers on Wednesday. He had been assured
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by an honourable friend who had seen the papers, that when they were laid before the House there would be nothing to impede a determination. He thought if the papers were such as to authorize the House to proceed, then it would be proper to decide; but if any doubt arose, then a motion for further information might be made.

Sir *W. Geary* thought that there ought to be some time allowed for deliberation before the House pronounced a decision which was either to raise this country to the highest rank in the scale of Europe, or plunge it into the lowest state of misfortune. He hoped, therefore, that the House would for this purpose defer the consideration of the message till Monday.

General *Tareleton* contended that some additional delay ought to be allowed, as it would be impossible for the House to be sufficiently ripe for discussion, and for pronouncing their opinion upon so important a point in the time that was proposed.

Lord *Hawkesbury* said he was surprized at the manner in which the honourable gentlemen opposite had argued. The usual mode was to take the King's message into consideration upon the day after it was brought down, and here several days were given that the opinions of gentlemen might be properly formed. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said, when the business was first intimated to the House, that the papers would be sufficient to bear out an ymotion of which they might form the foundation, and this had been confirmed by what had the preceding day fallen from the hon. Secretary of State. This he considered at present as all that was necessary. If the papers were inadequate, a motion might be made for the production of any others that might be thought requisite.

Mr. *Grey* said, that he would not take advantage of the absence of the honourable Chancellor of the Exchequer and Secretary of State, to press the matter any farther, and he lamented the cause to which their absence was owing. At the same time he was not convinced that he was wrong in the request which he had urged. Without meaning to call upon the honourable gentleman to disclose what officially he ought to conceal, he wished to know whether there were any papers relative to the steps taken in conjunction with the Emperor of Germany? With respect to the usual practice of taking a message into consideration the day after it was received, here the House were required to deliver an
opinion

opinion, founded upon papers which they had not an opportunity properly to consider.

The order for taking his Majesty's Message into consideration on Thursday was then discharged, and ordered to be taken into consideration on Friday.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, *Dec.* 28.

The Lords met this day at one o'clock, when a message being sent requiring the attendance of the House of Commons, and the Speaker, with other members attending accordingly, his Majesty's commission was read, by virtue of which the Royal assent was given to the following bills :

The bills for regulating the time of delivering in Transport, Navy, and Exchequer bills ; an act for allowing the importation of Foreign Goods in neutral vessels ; the additional Excise Duty bill ; bill for laying certain Duties of Customs on Goods, Wares, and Merchandize, carried coastwise ; the Scotch Distillery bill ; Stage-Coach duty bill ; an act for laying Stamp Duties on Leases, Indentures, &c. Post-Office and Packets additional duty bill ; and the Cape of Good Hope Navigation bill.

The Lords Commissioners, who sat in their robes, were the Lord Chancellor, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Duke of Portland.

The County Quota, Provisional Cavalry, and Augmentation Militia Amended bills ; the Navy and Exchequer Bills bill ; and the bill for allowing farther time for paying by installments, the Loan of Two Millions advanced by the East-India Company, passed through the committee, were reported, and read a third time.

After an adjournment, during pleasure, of near an hour, the Duke of Portland presented a number of papers relative to Lord Malmesbury's Negotiation with the Executive Directory of France. The titles were read, and the papers laid on the table.

Adjourned till the next day.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, *Dec.* 28.

The House, at one o'clock, attended in the House of Peers, to hear the Royal assent given by commission to several public

lick bills. At four the House met again, in consequence of an adjournment.

SOUTHWARK ELECTION.

Mr. *Whitbread* reminded the House, that when Mr. Tierney's petition respecting the Southwark Election was presented, he had given notice that he would make a specific motion upon the subject. Since that time a decision had been passed by the committee appointed to try the merits of that petition, which he was confident had given great satisfaction to every person who valued the freedom and the purity of election. After that decision he certainly should not move for any censure upon the unsuccessful candidate, considering the situation in which he now stood. But he gave notice, that soon after the recess he should make a general motion on the subject of the Treating act.

NEGOCIATION AT PARIS.

Mr. *Canning* brought up the papers respecting the Negotiation with France, which were ordered to be laid upon the table.

Mr. *Grey* observed, that there was not a copy of Lord Malmesbury's Instructions among these papers, of which he thought it important that the House should be in possession.

Mr. *Canning* said, that if the papers now upon the table were not, upon consideration, thought to contain sufficient information upon the subject to which they referred, the hon. gentleman would afterwards have an opportunity of moving for any other papers he might judge necessary.

Mr. *Grey* replied, that he would probably move for the production of Lord Malmesbury's Instructions the next day.

General *Tarleton* moved, that there be laid before the House an account of the Exchequer bills subscribed into stock, in consequence of the act passed this session, specifying the three, four, and five per cents. Ordered.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THURSDAY, Dec. 29.

The bills upon the table went through their several stages, and the House adjourned till next day.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, *Dec. 29.*

The amendments made by the Lords in the Supplemental Militia bill were read, agreed to, and a message was ordered to be sent to the Lords, to acquaint their Lordships that the Commons had agreed to the amendments.

Mr. *Long* brought up a bill for the better support and maintenance of the Poor, which was read a first time.

Mr. *Long* said his right hon. friend (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) was absent on account of his illness. His right hon. friend's desire was, that the bill should go through a committee of the whole House, in order that the blanks might be filled up, and the whole be printed before the recess, that gentlemen might have an opportunity of perusing it during the holidays. He should therefore move, that the bill be now read a second time; which was done, and the bill was ordered to be committed to a committee of the whole House on Saturday next.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, *December 30.*

The Royal Assent was given by Commission to the County Quota, Provisional Cavalry, and Militia Augmentation explanatory bills, to the East India Loan Installment bill, and to several private bills.

HIS MAJESTY'S MESSAGE.

Lord *Grenville* moved the order of the day for taking his Majesty's Message into consideration.

The *Earl of Guildford* rose and said, that before the order of the day was read, it would be proper that the Instructions to Lord Malmesbury should be laid upon the table, as upon reading the papers, that had been presented and printed, certain suspicions arose in his mind, that great blame was ascribable somewhere, either to the noble Lord, or his Majesty's ministers, which suspicions could only be removed or established so as to prove to whom they properly attached, by the information that an inspection of the Instructions would no doubt afford.

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Lord *Grenville* replied, that as to the suspicions entertained by the noble Earl, they would see hereafter how far those suspicions were supported, but he certainly should resist the production of the Instructions as altogether unprecedented and improper. Indeed he could hardly suppose the noble Earl was serious in calling for them.

The *Earl of Guildford* said, he certainly would not press for the production of the Instructions, if the noble Secretary of State objected to it, but he was most serious in his desire to have them laid upon the table, as the papers before them were not intelligible, unless the contents of the instructions were before them also. The noble Lord, however, would be pleased to recollect, that in a Court of Law, when the best evidence of the fact in question before a jury was called for, and the defendant withheld the instrument, it was always considered as a strong circumstance of suspicion.

The *Duke of Leeds* agreed with the noble Secretary of State, that the present was not a fit time to produce the Instructions of the noble Lord. The more regular mode of proceeding he conceived would be, to go into the discussion of the papers before them, and if in the course of it, it should appear necessary that the Instructions should be produced, to move for them after the debate.

The *Earl of Derby* begged leave to differ from the noble Duke, and to agree with his noble friend, that the Instructions ought to be presented previous to their entering into the discussion of the papers; in fact, his Lordship said, it would be perfectly idle and nugatory to discuss the contents of the papers without having the Instructions before them at the same time. To shew that this was the fact, his Lordship read a passage or two in Lord Malmesbury's letter to the noble Secretary, in which he referred directly to his Instructions. From the perusal of the papers every man, his Lordship said, must clearly see that great blame was due somewhere; whether the fault lay with Lord Malmesbury, who might possibly have ill done his duty, or with his Majesty's ministers, who gave him improper Instructions, could only be ascertained by a sight of the Instructions.

The *Duke of Leeds* said, he must still persist in his opinion that the more regular way to go into the debate on the papers, would be, to hear the motion that should be proposed upon them, before they called for the Instructions. When their Lordships were in possession of the motion which the noble Secretary of State should make, and had heard the arguments

that should be brought forward in the course of the discussion upon the correspondence between Lord Malmesbury and M. Delacroix, they would then be better able to form a judgment whether the production of the Instructions was necessary or not.

Lord Sydney wished the noble lords, who were so earnest in calling for the Instructions to consider the nature of the paper, they were desiring to have before them, and the consequences that might attend the production of it. If the instructions of the noble lord, who had with so much ability conducted the negotiation under consideration, were made known to that House, they would be in fact made known to all the world, and an improper use might be made of information, necessarily of a secret nature, which the instructions might convey. Not having the advantage of being bred to the law, he could not say what rules respecting evidence obtained in Courts of Justice, but he could easily perceive that although the withholding of an instrument necessary to the illustration of a cause in issue before a jury, might reasonably be deemed a circumstance of strong suspicion against the party withholding it, the case of withholding instructions to a Plenipotentiary in an important negotiation, which had been broken off abruptly and offensively by the enemy was extremely different, and by no means analogous. He did not intend in that preliminary debate to go into the main subject of the discussion, for which their lordships had been summoned, but he must remind the House, that it was most undeniable that the Executive Directory of France had demanded the *ultimatum* of his Majesty's Plenipotentiary, before they had condescended to enter into any sort of discussion of his first proposition, and that upon lord Malmesbury declining to comply with a requisition so strange and extravagant, they had rudely ordered him to quit the French territory on the sudden.

The Earl of *Abingdon* differed from the duke of Leeds, and thought the instructions ought to be produced.

Lord *Guildford* not pressing for the production, the Order of the Day was read.

Lord *Grenville* then rose and began a very able and eloquent speech with declaring that he felt it necessary to repeat, what he had said when the subject was introduced into that House a few days since, namely, that although from its importance and magnitude, if considered in all its bearings, it would lead into a very extensive field of discussion, yet that the view of it, which it would be necessary for the House
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to take and consider that day, and the particulars that called for their lordships immediate deliberation lay in a very narrow compass indeed. He lamented as much as any noble lord, as much as any man in the country, the sudden and abrupt termination of the negociation for peace with France. He trusted, however, that before he sat down, he should make it clear to every candid and unprejudiced mind, that the misfortune was not imputed to the conduct of his Majesty's ministers, but solely to the unjust and exorbitant claims of the enemy. Their lordships would learn from the papers on the table, that from the commencement of the year his Majesty had manifested the most sincere and anxious desire to effect the restoration of peace to Europe, on just, honourable, and permanent terms to himself and his Allies. In the month of February his Majesty's Plenipotentiary to the Swiss Cantons had been authorised to signify to Monsieur Barthelemy, the French Ambassador at Basle, the desire of his Court, (the Court of London) to be made acquainted with the dispositions of France in regard to the object of a general pacification, and they would see that Mr. Wickham's note transmitted to Monsieur Barthelemy for that purpose was dated the 8th of March, and the reply of that minister, dictated in terms the most insulting and unprovoked, was dated the 26th of the same month. Not discouraged by the inadmissible and extravagant pretensions set up by France on that occasion, his Majesty stimulated by his paternal feelings for his people, and his earnest wishes to stop the further effusion of blood and give repose to Europe, did not suffer himself to be diverted from his object, but still determined to renew his endeavours to bring about a negociation for a general peace, with that view early in September last he had the honour to receive his Majesty's commands to transmit a note to the Danish minister to be forwarded to the Charge d'Affaires of his Danish Majesty at Paris, to be delivered by him to the foreign minister, who after some delay gave the Charge d'Affaires to understand verbally, that the Executive Directory of the French Republic would not in future receive or answer any overtures transmitted through any intermediate channel from the enemies of the Republic, but if they would send persons furnished with full powers, they might upon the frontiers demand the passports necessary for proceeding to Paris. In consequence application was directly made to the Minister for Foreign Affairs at Paris for the necessary passports, and Lord Malmesbury was sent to negotiate, and gave notice of his arrival
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on the 22d of October, and took the most immediate steps for fulfilling the duties of the office with which he was charged. It was unnecessary for him to state at length the repeated endeavours of the French Directory to defeat this negociation in its outset, and to break off the intercourse after it had been opened, even before the first steps towards negociation could be taken. The indecent and injurious language that had been employed by the French government, with a view to irritate, he would not condescend to notice; such abuse was disgraceful only to those who resorted to it. The flimsy pretences, the captious and frivolous objections raised for the purpose of obstructing the progress of the discussion; all these were sufficiently notorious from the official papers on the table, and which were known to all Europe. But above all, the abrupt termination of the negociation had furnished the most decisive proof, that at no period had any real wish for peace been entertained on the part of the French Directory. His Majesty had persevered to the last moment to give to France, as well as to all Europe, the most incontestible proofs of a very sincere desire for the restoration of the blessings of peace; and after repeated evasion and delay, the French Directory had at length consented to establish, as the basis of negociation, a principle that was proposed by his Majesty, just and liberal in its own nature, equitable towards France herself, and calculated to provide for the interests of his Majesty's Allies, as well as of all Europe. It had been agreed that compensation should be made to France by proportionable restitutions for the cessions which she in her turn should be called upon to make to his Majesty's Allies. After the establishment of that principle, his Majesty's minister at Paris delivered to the French minister a memorial, containing the proposals of his Majesty. Along with that memorial there was an accompanying note, stating, that his Majesty's minister would with the utmost readiness enter with M. Delacroix into every explanation, which the state and progress of the negociation would allow; that he would not fail to enter into the discussion of these propositions; or if they should be rejected *in toto*, he was willing to enter into any counter-project which the Executive Directory itself might be pleased to bring forward, with that frankness and conciliation which corresponded with the just and pacific dispositions of his Majesty and his ministers. To that communication, his Majesty's minister received an answer from the French Directory, in form the most offensive, and in substance the most extravagant, that ever was made

made in the progress of any negotiation. It was peremptorily required of him, that in the very commencement of the business, before any answer had been given by the Directory to his propositions, without presenting any objections to his first proposal, or any other offer or plan of peace, he should, within 24 hours, deliver in the *ultimatum* of his court. Was there a similar instance ever known in the history of the world? Was it ever known before, that an *ultimatum* had been demanded even before the negotiation itself had actually commenced? There was no such instance to be found in the whole history of treaties. Such a demand could not possibly be made for any other purpose than to shut the doors against all discussion, against all negotiation, all explanation, and all possibility of an amicable adjustment of the different points in issue. Why did not the French Directory state their objections to the proposals that were made to them? Why did they not tell his Majesty's minister on what terms they would have been ready to make peace? Not a word was said in return, and the British minister was ordered to leave the territories of the Republic in twice the space of 24 hours.

To an assembly enlightened as that was, to which he was addressing himself, Lord Grenville said, it would be an insult in him to enter into an explanation of the usual form of proceeding in a negotiation between two independent powers; not only their Lordships but every man out of that house at all acquainted with political history well knew, that the customary mode was for that power which made the first overture to negotiate to give in its *project*, or proposals of expectations, and that *project* was immediately put into discussion; or, if the other power chose it, they presented a counter *project* and that became the object of discussion, and mutual concessions are made till the parties come pretty near to an agreement, and then and then only an *ultimatum* is resorted to; nor was that mode of procedure peculiar to two nations negotiating on great publick concerns, it was the mode of proceeding adopted and necessarily adopted between private individuals who have any differences to settle with each other, and indeed the only mode in which differences, where opposite claims are made and opposite rights asserted, that can lead to a mutual accommodation. But what did the French do? They would not recognize the regular mode of discussion. They would not even enter into the slightest conversation on the subject of the proposal we had made, but demanded at once that we should present our
ultimatum.

ultimatum; so contrary to all practice, and so ignorant of the established modes were the Directory. It was obvious, that by this mode of proceeding all chance of agreement was destroyed. For suppose that they had presented what might have been called their *ultimatum*, it followed that if the French did not agree to it implicitly, a rupture of negotiation must follow, or else that the *ultimatum* must cease to be an *ultimatum*. But even if it were necessary that in a negotiation between two parties there should be no previous contention about points, no bargaining, no asking for more than it was possibly intended to take, but that, in the first instance, the *ultimatum* should be fairly and *bona fide* proposed, why did not the French propose their terms, and state their *ultimatum*? We certainly had as much reason to call for it, as they had to call for ours. Why? but because they never had any real and sincere intention of bringing the negotiation to a happy issue. It was apparent through all their conduct, and accordingly they committed the most direct and gross insult upon the English nation, by dismissing our minister, and allowing him only twice 24 hours to depart their territory. If, in addition to that insult, any farther proof were necessary of the dispositions of those who offered it, such proof would be abundantly supplied by the contents of the note in which the order was conveyed. The mode of negotiation on which the French Directory had itself insisted, was there rejected, and no practical means left open for treating with effect. The basis of negotiation, so recently recognized by mutual consent, was there disclaimed, and in its room a principle, clearly inadmissible, was re-asserted as the only ground on which the French could consent to treat. The French Directory now said, as they had formerly done, that they could not treat on the principle of mutual restitution, because it was contrary to their laws, their constitution, and they had lately added, the faith of treaties. That was a principle which never could be admitted by this country, or any other independent nation. It was in fact to admit, that the French Republic possessed the only supreme power in Europe, and that all other countries might be parcelled out by them at pleasure into what they were pleased to call republics, but which in fact had not the remotest resemblance to that form of government. The admission of such a principle would entirely destroy the law of nations, by which the different nations of Europe, who were independent of each other, had professed to be governed for centuries. That principle superseded all interests, destroyed all
treaties.

treaties, and gave to France, and to France alone, the power to make what laws she pleased, which should be considered as the only law of nations, and which she might alter and modify as much and as often as she pleased. According to this principle, his Majesty and his allies were bound to restore to France the greatest part of their conquests, while the French Republic was to retain all those she had made. The admission of that principle the French Directory had stated as a *sine qua non*, as an indispensable preliminary to all negotiation, a principle, under which the terms of peace must have been regulated, not by the usual considerations of justice, policy, and reciprocal submission, on the part of all other powers, but by a claim founded on the internal laws and separate constitution of France, as possessing full authority to supersede the treaties entered into by independent states, to govern their interests, to controul their engagements, and to dispose of their dominions. This miserable and unjust pretence, so contrary to the law of nations and to the dignity of Great Britain, was founded too on a false statement of their own constitution, which if he understood it, did not enjoin any thing so monstrous and so absurd; on the contrary, it gave to the government the power of making secret articles under certain conditions. In M. Delacroix's note, No. 31, the Directory refuse to listen to two memorials without signatures, which though it is contrary to all usage, and perfectly unnecessary to sign when accompanied by signed official notes, he thought the noble Lord did perfectly right to comply with and sign; but their conduct in this instance proved that they complained of a matter respecting which they are profoundly ignorant, and set up as a plea in bar of concession, a constitution which they could not explain. It was true that M. Delacroix said, that the Directory construed the act of their constitution according to the manner in which it was explained by the best *Publicists*. He had never read the *Publicists* on the constitution of France; he had not thought it necessary to waste his time and sacrifice his leisure upon a subject so transitory and fleeting as the constitution of France; because, if he had read the publicists of the constitution of 1789, he would have found all the doctrines of that constitution demolished by that which followed it in 1791; that again he would have found destroyed by the constitution of 1792, which in its turn was forced to yield to the constitution of 1793; and he had no doubt but that this would be destroyed like its predecessors. The month of March next

would hardly elapse before perhaps, a new revolution would give occasion to the remarks and to the doctrines of the new publicists totally destroying all the opinions which were formed before, and a new *Corpus Juris* would make all the study of the former publicists lost time. Though he had two employed himself therefore in this useless study, he had no hesitation in saying that this principle was outrageous, and that it struck at the root of all the relations of co-existing powers. One of the arguments of these publicists in favour of written constitutions over old Gothic institutions like our own, was, that every measure was ascertained, and every act defined, so that there never could be any dispute or quibble about what was or was not the constitution. Such was the boast, but yet their lordships would see that so far from its being ascertained what was and what was not agreeable to the constitution, their pretensions now were more outrageous than when the note was presented at Basle, by Mr. Wickham. Then they had only said that nothing contrary to their laws and their constitution could be entertained; now they tell us that nothing contrary to their constitution, their laws, and existing treaties could be complied with. He had looked at their public treaties, and he averred there was nothing in them hostile to the propositions which had been made. What their laws were, he professed he could not tell, nor could he answer for the secret articles which might have been included in their treaties; it was not possible for him to say what private engagements they might have made with their deluded allies and friends in that way. Whether they promised them Jamaica or Gibraltar, or whatever other preposterous thing he knew not; but he submitted to their lordships whether it was possible to admit this kind of reasoning, and whether, if his Majesty had been advised to act upon it, it would not have been laying the crown of England at the feet of the French Directory. After much masterly reasoning on the arrogant, evasive and insulting conduct of the French Directory, his lordship said, he should not affront the understandings of their lordships by entering more fully into the business. Every candid man must see clearly where the fault lay. It was on such grounds as these that the further effusion of human blood, the continued calamities of war, the interruptions of peaceable and friendly intercourse among mankind, the prolonged distresses of Europe, and the accumulated miseries of France itself, were, by the government of that country, to be justified to the world. His Majesty and his
ministers

ministers had entered into the negotiation with perfect good faith; had suffered no impediment to prevent their prosecuting it with earnestness and sincerity; they had now only to lament its abrupt termination; and to renew in the face of Europe their most solemn declaration, that whenever the French Government should be disposed to enter on the work of general pacification, in a spirit of conciliation and equity, nothing should be wanting on the part of this country to contribute to the accomplishment of that great object, with a view to which his Majesty had already offered such considerable sacrifices on his part, and which was now retarded only by the exorbitant pretensions of France. His lordship concluded with moving.

"That an humble address be presented to his Majesty to assure his Majesty that that House also felt the utmost concern that his Majesty's earnest endeavours to effect the restoration of peace had been unhappily frustrated, and that the negotiation in which he had been happily engaged had been abruptly broken off by the peremptory refusal of the French government to treat, except upon a basis evidently inadmissible, and by their having in consequence required his Majesty's Plenipotentiary to quit Paris within 48 hours.

"To thank his Majesty for having directed the several memorials and papers which had been exchanged in the course of the late discussion, and the account transmitted to his Majesty of its final result, to be laid before the House.

"That their lordships were perfectly satisfied, from the perusal of these papers, that his Majesty's conduct had been guided by a sincere desire to effect the restoration of peace, on principles suited to the relative situation of the Belligerent powers, and essential for the permanent interests of his Majesty's kingdom's, and the general security of Europe; whilst his enemies had advanced pretensions at once inconsistent with those objects, unsupported even on the grounds on which they were professed to rest, and repugnant both to the system established by repeated treaties, and to the principles and practice which had hitherto regulated the intercourse of independent nations.

"To assure his Majesty, that under the protection of providence, he might place the fullest reliance on the wisdom and firmness of parliament, on the tried valour of his forces by sea and land, and on the zeal, public spirit, and resources of his kingdoms, for vigorous and effectual support in the prosecution of a contest, which it did not depend on his Majesty to terminate, and which involved in it the security and permanent interests of this country and Europe."

The *Lord Chancellor* having read the motion, was about to put the question, when

The *Earl of Guilford* said, that he had heard with concern, and he confessed with some surprise, the observations which had fallen from the noble Lord that day. It was a day that every noble Lord would unanimously join with him in calling

calling the most calamitous this country had ever seen, except, perhaps, the day on which they first entered into this most disastrous and unprovoked contest. He knew that upon this there would be perfect unanimity of opinion; but whether they would agree with him in his next assertion he knew not; however, for his own part, he would not hesitate to declare that day to be most disgraceful to ministers, since it demonstrated their utter incapacity both for negotiation and for war. It was not only a day of exposure of their weakness and incapacity, but of their miserable, evasive, and sinister proceeding, of their want of candour, and he was afraid of their want of sincerity. Such a mass of criminal imbecility and of disgraceful absurdity, as the papers on the table exhibited, he never witnessed. Every principle upon which they had set out had been retracted, every pretension which they had held out to their country, surrendered, every fact with which they had imposed upon the easy confidence of their Lordships, falsified, and they were now brought into the ignominious situation of acknowledging that all their former principles were mere pretexts, and that they had in every instance merely adopted the expedient that was most suitable to their purpose for the day, without regard to the dignity of their sovereign, to the honour and interests of their country, or to the just and manly consistency which a nation ought ever to hold in its conduct towards a foreign power. He called upon their Lordships to look at the miserable declaration which had been published, and to compare it with the correspondence on the table, and they would see that in every instance it was either inconsistent or false. He pointed out several glaring incongruities in that paper, and then said that he was not so sanguine as to believe that under the magnitude of the calamities which ministers had brought upon the country, he could suggest any thing that could give the House just confidence in the safety of the nation; but he trusted that if their Lordships would yet pause, the proposition he meant to make would prevent the ruin from being immediate. The declaration stated that every step had been taken to promote the desirable object of peace, he would venture to say that there was not a flatterer of government in the House who would lay his hand upon his heart, and in the face of his country say, that he believed this to be the fact. No, it was notorious that opportunities of the most favourable kind had been neglected, and that this very negotiation, conducted as it was, had not even a chance to be

be successful. He came to the main point at issue between the two countries, the Austrian Netherlands. It was not necessary, he said, for him, or for any man who sat on his side of the House, to enter into the question, at present, of—Whether we ought or ought not to make a peace on the basis of leaving the Austrian Netherlands in the hands of France? He would not disguise his opinion of the value of that sacrifice: but he averred that the declaration was inaccurate when it said, that the basis originally agreed upon included specifically the restitution of this among other of the French acquisitions. The basis agreed upon was to offer, on our part, proportionable restitutions for the cessions to be demanded. The fact was not very honourable to either of the parties. If the *Status ante Bellum* had been the principle agreed on, his Lordship was ready to admit that the French had departed from that principle; but that was by no means the case. The principle that was to form the basis of the negotiation was that of proportional restitution; and was there any man living who could say that what we offered to be restored to France was an equivalent to what we asked of her to restore to our allies? He thought there was not a noble Lord in that House that would maintain a proposition so absurd. It was notorious from the papers produced, that his Majesty's servants had not been sincere in any part of this business. Their first proposal stated in their first memorial was such, that they could not reasonably hope it would be agreed to on the part of France. If they were to trust to the evidence of the letter of Lord Malmesbury, the basis of the negotiation was not strictly regarded on either side; the *status quo ante bellum* had not been suitable to the views of any one of the parties; it appeared that they were eager to cut and carve for themselves at the expense of their victims. We were to consent to strip our old ally, Holland, in one quarter for the French, in another for ourselves; and every feeble power was to be stripped and plundered in order to satisfy the avarice and the ambition of the leading powers engaged in the contest. But it was contended, that the French had at length set up a principle that was contrary to all the rights of nations, and that made all negotiation impracticable; they had said that the Austrian Netherlands were a *sine qua non*. Granted.—Had not Lord Malmesbury said as much? Had he not acknowledged that by an existing treaty with the Emperor and King, it was impossible for England to make peace while a single country belonging to the Emperor remained in
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the hands of France? Did not this make negotiation as impracticable as their declaration of the Netherlands? By this he confessed to the French that the whole negotiation was a nullity; that England had it not in her power to make peace but through the Court of Vienna: that whatever might be her situation of distress, or of defeat, it must only be through an Imperial rescript that she could make peace. What a farce then was the whole of the negotiation? Upon the face of it it exhibits its own imbecility; it was never meant to be any thing more than a delusion—To the conditions of peace pointed out in the memorial in the papers on the table he would not pledge himself. He saw the importance of most of them, the necessity of some; but he knew also that national necessity might controul political opinion, and that they might not have it in their power to argue about what was wise, but about what was practicable. He had no scruple in saying that it would be a great calamity to this country if the Netherlands should remain in the hands of France; but at the same time it was a great question whether this country ought to go on, and spend more than they were worth for the chance of rescuing them from their hands. And the time might come when this country might learn to appreciate the Netherlands. He took notice of the expression of the noble Secretary, that the dismissal of our minister was an insult to the nation. The noble Lord then had at length corrected his former opinion in regard to Monsieur Chauvelin, and was now brought to feel that the dismissal of a minister was an insult. He trusted that the influence of this new light would be visible in the future moderation of the King's ministers. He accused them of not having profited from the favourable opportunities which the success of the Duke of York at Valenciennes presented for offering terms of peace. Then when Flanders was not united to France, when they had not subdued Holland; when they had not over-run Italy; when they were trembling for their safety, why were not offers of peace made to them? Why? but because the scandalous and fatal thirst of aggrandizement prevailed over every sentiment of wisdom and honour, and because the contract of partition was then in its full vigour. He called upon their Lordships to make a solemn pause, and to reflect upon the dreadful measure of that day. Let them remember that the minister had been forced to hold out a *bonus* of 10 or 12 *per cent.* with one hand, and an intimidation with the other, in order to procure the loan of the year, and whether he even had
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procured it or not, was doubtful. It was a proof of national calamity, that even this enormous *bonus* was less than men could procure for the use of their money by other means. Instead, then, of pledging themselves to the further continuance of this war, it was his proposition that they should declare to his Majesty that they would proceed to enquire into the past conduct of it, to ascertain the source of the calamities which had been brought upon the country, by which they might be able even to deliver the state from its perilous situation. For this purpose he moved as an amendment, that, after the words "returning his Majesty thanks for his gracious message," there be inserted the following :

That this House has learnt with inexpressible concern, that the negociation his Majesty lately commenced for the restoration of peace has been unhappily frustrated.

In so awful and momentous a crisis, the House of Lords feel it their duty, to speak to his Majesty with that freedom and earnestness which becomes men anxious to preserve the honour of his Majesty's crown and to secure the interests of his people. That, in doing this, they sincerely deplore that they are under the necessity of declaring, that, as well from the manner in which the late negociation has been conducted, as from the substance of the memorial which appears to have produced the abrupt termination of it, they have reason to think his Majesty's ministers were not sincere in their endeavours to procure the blessings of peace so necessary for this distressed country, and that all prospect of pacification seems entirely removed from their view. For on the one hand his Majesty's ministers insist upon the restitution of the Netherlands to the Emperor as a *sine qua non* from which they have pledged his Majesty not to recede ; while, on the other, the Executive Directory of the French Republic with equal pertinacity claim the preservation of that part of their conquests as a condition from which they cannot depart.

That, under these circumstances, this House cannot help lamenting the rashness and injustice of his Majesty's ministers, whose long continued misconduct has produced this embarrassing situation, by advising his Majesty before the blessings of peace had been unfortunately interrupted to refuse all negociation for the adjustment of the then subsisting differences, although at that time the Netherlands, now the main obstacle to the return of tranquility, so far from being considered as an object of contest, was solemnly renounced, and the peace of Europe offered into his Majesty's hands upon the basis of that renunciation, and upon the security and independence of Holland, whilst she preserved her neutrality towards France.

That this House hath further deeply to regret, that soon after the commencement of the war, when by the vigour of his Majesty's arms, with the assistance of his allies, the Republic of Holland had been rescued from invasion, and the greater part of the Netherlands had been recovered by the Emperor ; at a time too when
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most of the Princes of Europe, with resources yet unexhausted, continued firm in their alliances with Great Britain, his Majesty's ministers did not avail themselves of this high and commanding position for the Negotiation of an honourable Peace, and the establishment of the political balance of Europe; that on the contrary, without any example in the principles and practice of this or any other nation, it is with pain this House recollects his Majesty's ministers refused to set on foot any negotiation whatever with the French Republic; not upon a real or even alleged unwillingness on his part to listen to the propositions now rejected by her, or to any other specific proposal of indemnity or political security, but upon the arrogant and insulting pretence that her Government was not capable of maintaining the accustomed relations of peace and amity amongst nations, and that on this unfounded and merely speculative assumption his Majesty was advised to continue the war to a period when the difficulties in the way of peace have been so much increased by the defect of most of the powers engaged in the confederacy, and by the conquests and consequent pretensions of the French Republic.

That this House having thus humbly submitted to his Majesty the reflections which his Majesty's gracious communication immediately suggest, feel themselves in duty bound, for the information of his Majesty, and the satisfaction of an exhausted people, to proceed with unremitting diligence to investigate the causes which have produced our present calamities, and to offer such advice as the critical and alarming circumstances of the nation may require.

The *Earl of Liverpool* said that the pompous speech of the noble Earl did not, in his mind, present to their Lordships sufficient arguments for adopting the amendment which he had proposed; an amendment which went to encourage France and to stop all idea of defending ourselves against an enemy who had manifested dispositions impracticable with our safety. They had expressly avowed that they would not agree to any peace that should be contrary to what they called their constitution, their laws, and their treaties. It was impossible to know what secret articles might lurk under their publick treaties; and therefore it was impossible to treat with a people who stood upon such undefined grounds, If what they made their basis of negociation were submitted to, their legislature would not only legislate for France but for all Europe. Was such a claim to be endured for a single moment? The terms which had been offered were ample as compensations for what we demanded:—we had offered to France all that we had taken from her, in return for her surrender of that which we thought necessary to the safety of Europe. Her West India Islands were of immense value to her: they were the source of her marine; produced to her a revenue of nearly ten millions annually. But if she did not think

think the terms sufficiently ample, why did she not say so? It was contrary to every principle of negotiation not to state her demand, if she thought ours unreasonable. Instead of this, she had only made a lofty declaration that the Austrian Netherlands could not make a part of her cessions. The noble Earl had mentioned this as a slight matter, but he was sure their Lordships would see it in another point of view. Flanders was our best key to the continental market. He deprecated therefore the idea of lowering its importance. Noble Lords who really wished for peace would much better serve their country by not making observations, in such a crisis, tending to lower the spirit of the people.

The *Earl of Guildford* said, that he by no means mentioned the Austrian Netherlands as a slight matter. He acknowledged its importance, but hoped, that if we were to go on with the war to snatch it from France, the country would learn to appreciate its real value.

The *Earl of Derby* animadverted on the insinuation of Lord Liverpool; that those who really wished for peace would do well to abstain from charges against ministers. He said the insinuation was not becoming the noble lord to make; independent men, who felt for the calamities of their country, would pronounce their sentiments, however it might be unpleasant to the ears of those persons who had brought us to our present condition. Had he not opposed the war in its principle, he should have become decidedly its foe from its disgraceful conduct, and having no confidence, that past imbecility would give us future vigour, he must continue to deplore its existence, and particularly in such hands. He asserted, that we had not in the negotiation made offers that were equivalent, and that the conduct of the French in the affair was provoked by our arrogance. He said Lord Malmesbury's letter to the noble Secretary of State ought not to have been printed. It was a mere report of a conversation, not an official document. He deplored the unjustifiable exposure of a conversation; an exposure evidently made for the sake of the words printed in italics, and to furnish a parade on the wasted resources of the enemy. The publick were by this means to be reduced into a belief of their ruin, and yet the words of this conversation were disproved by the facts that followed, for this ruined and undone country determines to go on with the war. His Lordship thought there were symptoms of insincerity in the conduct of the King's ministers on this business; and therefore he was inclined to second the amendment of his noble

friend. His lordship thought that Pondicherry, in the East Indies, and Martinico, St. Lucia, and Tobago in the West Indies, could never be considered as an equivalent for the Milanese, and the Austrian Netherlands, which the French were required to give to our allies. He called upon their lordships to think on the state of this country; would the noble Baron on the cross bench (Lord Auckland) again come forward and boast of the comparative resources of this country and of France? Let their Lordships reflect on the melancholy condition to which the country was reduced; the loan was now at between 5 and 6 *per cent*, discount before a payment was made upon it; would there not be many defaulters? It was notorious many names were subscribed for great sums, where they were known not to possess half their subscription in their lives. Bankruptcies were daily encreasing, and in the country such was the state of manufactures, that they reduced the number of hours of their labour, in order thereby to reduce their wages, as the only means of not turning them entirely out of bread. He had heard it said, that even at Birmingham, out of 16000 houses, 4000 were untenanted; and it was notorious, that in most of the great towns the penury and depopulation were enormous. The price of volunteers for the army was 25 or 30 guineas. A substitute for the militia was now 15 or 16 guineas. The new supplementary militia would take every fifth man in the kingdom, and yet only 60 or 70,000 men were to be raised. Could they go on in this fatal career? He trusted that a motion would be made for a committee to enquire into the state of the nation.

Lord Auckland said, that some expressions which the noble Earl who spoke last had addressed to him on the subject of English and French finance, would have made it necessary for him to solicit their Lordships attention for a few minutes, even if he had not been induced to it by other considerations. He had however previously felt that it was impossible to submit in silence to the language of the noble Earl (Lord Guildford) who moved the amendment, and who had thought proper to say that "this is a day of disgrace and affliction;" of disgrace to the King's ministers, and of affliction to his Majesty's dominions. Lord Auckland desired to declare his entire dissent to both these propositions, and feeling himself now at liberty to consider the negotiation as at an end, he would speak of it without reserve. He had restrained himself at the opening of the session, and had marked no opinion, though in his private mind he then participated

ticipated some of the sentiments of a noble Earl (Lord Fitzwilliam), who had avowed a strong dislike to the negotiation. He had been silent, because he was unwilling even to seem to throw a prejudice on the measure. He thought it, under all the circumstances of the time, an experiment necessary to be made, for the purpose of demonstrating to these kingdoms, and to all the world, that the prolongation of the calamities of war ought to be ascribed to those from whose madness and wickedness the war had originated. Under that impression, repugnant and painful as it was to him to send a Plenipotentiary to Paris to court the fraternal embraces of the Directory, and to say in the words of Anthony to the assassins of Cæsar—

“ Let each man render me his bloody hand *

He had acquiesced in the negotiation; believing, however, on the one hand, that it would not tend to accelerate the return of peace; but confident, on the other, that by the wisdom of his Majesty's government, it would not be detrimental either to the interests or to the honour of the British empire. He knew enough of the constitution of the pretended Republic of France to know (and this was not a novel opinion of his, he had long ago published it) that it is incompatible with a state of peace. That constitution had no resemblance of a Republick, but was in truth the most odious aristocracy that ever had been recorded in the annals of mankind. Its leaders had no security in their possession of unparalleled power, no safety in their consciousness of unparalleled crimes, but in the violent predicament of war. Whatever might be his abhorrence of their enormities, he was ready to acknowledge that they possess great talents; talents more than sufficient to appreciate their own situation, and to keep them awake to the dangers which

* Upon this masterly speech of Antony (which occurs in the first scene of the third act of Shakespeare's JULIUS CÆSAR, immediately after Cæsar's assassination), so apt a parody offers itself, that the Reporter trusts he shall stand excused for inserting it:

“ Let each man render me his bloody hand :

“ First, La Reveillère, will I shake with you ;—

“ Merlin and Louvet, next I take your hands ;

“ Now, Tallien, yours ;—now yours, Le Gendre ;

“ Yours Carnot ; and my valliant Barras yours ;—

“ Though last, not least in love, yours, good Syeyes,”

hang over it. It was well known to some who now heard him, that these were his opinions when the Negotiation took place. The experiment had been tried; and the result had been such as to satisfy every unprejudiced man in Europe, that the French government is decidedly for war. The experiment had been fairly and fully tried; and the result is, that the British empire owes great obligations, both to the noble Lord who gave the Instructions, and to the noble Lord who executed those Instructions. They had gone to the utmost verge of concession, and yet they had never lost sight of the essential interests and honourable character of their country.

In every step, they had blended extreme conciliation with unshaken dignity. The whole negotiation had been conducted with such wisdom, that we are in no degree engaged (thank God!) to revolt to any of its propositions; we are bound to nothing; the entire transaction is null and void; like to the Address now proposed to their Lordships by the noble Secretary of State, it pledges neither Parliament nor the nation to any specific offers or concessions in any circumstances that may hereafter arise.

In some views of collateral policy it might be regretted that we had been obliged to publish possible arrangements involving the interests, and eventually affecting the attachment of some of our present dependencies: But on the whole he was willing to allow that the measure had been beneficial, in as far as it had satisfied the minds of many well-meaning men, whose benevolence led them to leave nothing untried that might by possibility put an end to the calamities of war.

He would not enter into any remarks on the propositions made by our Plenipotentiary; it would be both irregular and unwise to discuss them in Parliament, whilst the war is still depending. He would only observe, what no man could deny, that specific overtures had been made on our part, and that those overtures had been accompanied by an offer, repeatedly urged, to enter into the consideration of any other propositions that the enemy might think more eligible. Such had been our overtures! Such had been our entreaties to obtain an unequivocal negotiation for peace? The whole had been put aside with scorn, and our Plenipotentiary had been ordered to quit Paris in forty-eight hours. Their Lordships would here remark, that this insult had been accompanied by the avowal of a principle which purports to annex inseparably to France the conquered territories of our ally, though we had offered a full and generous compensation for them: and the same principle implies that

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we are to restore, without compensation, any French territories which we may have conquered, because it is pretended that those possessions make a part of the Indivisible Republic, by her constitution or by her laws. To this strange doctrine had now been superadded the declaration, that the Directory would listen to no proposition contrary to the constitution, laws, or *treaties*, leaving the world to conjecture or to discover what the purport and extent of those treaties might be.

Lord Auckland proceeded to say, that such positions could never merit a serious refutation. They did not surprise him, because he always thought that our overtures would be rejected. If we had even offered (what he trusted in God we should never be reduced to offer) to give up the Austrian Netherlands; if we had disgracefully proposed to abandon the interests of our firm, honourable, and heroic ally; there could not now exist in the mind of any of their Lordships a doubt, that some other extravagant and insulting claim would have been brought forwards, to frustrate the negotiation and to prolong the war. He was not surprised at the failure of the negotiation, he had expected it. He was only puzzled to explain why the Directory had thought it expedient to precipitate the conclusion, and to tear off so abruptly the thin veil of moderation, which the distresses and wishes of the French provinces had forced them to assume. And surely they might have found a better ground for continuing the war, than that which they had chosen. The word "indivisible," to which they now assign so extensive a construction, had nothing to do with the annexed territories of the Republic; it related merely to a question formerly much agitated, whether the French Provinces should be federal states, or united into one Republic. The pretended restriction in the constitution of 1795 was equally inapplicable to the point in question: that restriction was expressed in the following words:—"If a treaty contains secret articles, the purport of those articles shall not be destructive of the publick articles, nor contain any alienation of the territory of the Republic." There is nothing in those words to prohibit cessions of territory by publick articles; there is nothing in those words contrary to the universal and necessary principle, that parts of the possessions of every state may by the events and circumstances of war, become liable to negotiation. If it were otherwise, and if other powers should assert similar doctrines, all wars must be eternal through the world, from the moment that a single conquest is made by
either

either party. Why, therefore, would the Directory chuse a ground of rupture so void of justice, of common sense, and of decency? They might have answered to our propositions, that they could not give up the Austrian Netherlands, because they have robbed the convents, and sold the church lands, and alienated the Imperial domains, and because they are receiving the price of their rapine as one of the few remaining resources for the prosecution of the war. In such an answer there was no great relish of salvation; but at least it would have been a display of the sort of good faith which subsists among despoilers.

They might have answered (and in fact they had already said it in their too memorable Convention), that the Austrian Netherlands were necessary to them, in order to make Paris more central, the radius from their metropolis to the north being much too short, when compared to the radius drawn to the south. Such a claim would have been ridiculous, still, however, it would have stood open to discussion.

Lastly, they might have said (as a noble Earl had that day suggested for them) that, like to Shylock in the comedy, "They had an oath in Heaven;" though indeed Heaven was not peculiarly the place in which their oaths may be supposed to be recorded. Whatever allegation they had adopted, they could not have made so bad a choice as that which M. De la Croix had been instructed to bring forwards.

To what then, it will be said, are we now to look? The answer was obvious. It had been an alternative present to his mind, and he had prepared himself to meet it from the first mention of the negociation. He was sure that he felt the evils and horrors of war, as powerfully as any of the noble Lords who were pleased to indulge themselves in pathetic declamations. But he felt also, that it was unmanly and useless to complain, when there is no remedy within the grasp or reach of our faculties. Their Lordships were not ignorant that there may be worse evils and greater horrors than those of a foreign war. The proofs are unhappily too recent and too notorious in the wide and desolated countries of the enemy. Were their Lordships reduced and prepared to submit these kingdoms to the mandates of the French Directory, to the regicide rod of iron, to a visitation of anarchy and of all its train of rapine, massacres, confusion, and calamity? Were their Lordships reduced to the dastardly and wretched hope, that we may maintain a precarious and insulated existence, by abandoning the Austrian Netherlands,
by

by betraying the treaties which so justly attach us to the Emperor, to Portugal, and to Russia, by renouncing all Continental interests and connections, and by exposing these islands to a long chain of pretended Republics, but of mad democracies, stretching from the borders of Denmark to the foot of Italy?

To what then are we to look? To the necessity forced upon us: to the continuance of the war, manfully and with redoubled energy; till our implacable and cruel enemy shall be brought to the position which alone can give to us an honourable and solid peace. And what is that position? He believed with regard to the enemy that it must be neither more nor less than a decided incapacity to maintain and prolong the war, and he was disposed to believe that such an incapacity was not far distant. He was here well aware that some persons might impatiently exclaim, that the downfall of the French finances had too long been predicted: that it had been looked for in vain week after week, month after month, and year after year. To such persons he would reply, that if the respective predicaments of the two countries were the reverse of what they happily are; if the navigation, commerce, and revenues of France were prosperous, and those of Great Britain involved in universal bankruptcy, still we should have no alternative as to our line of conduct: the enemy left us no choice between war and utter perdition. It was surely gratifying in such an extremity to contemplate the unexhausted vigour of our own resources, and the extreme distress of our antagonist. And now he came to the point on which the noble Earl who spoke last had called upon him. He was ready at any time to enter into a full discussion of the existing comparative resources of the two countries: he saw nothing in such a discussion that ought not to carry comfort and confidence to the bosom of every Englishman. At present he would content himself, so far as the resources, prosperity, and the steady and honourable spirit of this nation are in question, with a reference to the late subscription loan of eighteen millions sterling. The lustre of that transaction was certainly not diminished by the strange objection of some of the noble Lords, who had said that it was a borrowing money under the market price. He would proceed to make some observations on the finances of the enemy. And he could here appeal to the recollection of their Lordships, that he never had, through the course of this perilous war, shewn a disposition to depreciate the means
of

of the French government, so long as that government possessed the resource of terror, violence, confiscation, and murder in the unexampled extent with which that resource had been employed, he never had ventured to prescribe limits to its faculties. He could not reason respecting them; there was nothing which bore analogy to them in the history of mankind. But M. Delacroix in his conference with Lord Malmesbury has ingenuously confessed, that it is become impracticable to employ revolutionary powers; or in other words, that a despotic authority can no longer be exercised over lives and property. What then must be the consequence? Lord Auckland said, that he would not attempt to point it out by calculations or by reasonings: he would state it from the avowal of those who best know it, and who have felt themselves forced to proclaim it to their unhappy country. He would state it *verbatim* from the preamble of the late message sent by the Directory on the 10th of this month to the council of 500 for the purpose of enforcing, as the only remaining resource, an expedient which every man who examined it, must pronounce to be fallacious and unproductive. The following is the preamble alluded to:

“ Citizens Representatives! The multiplied wants of
 “ the Republic call your attention imperiously to the un-
 “ folding and employment of her resources. All the bran-
 “ ches of the service, you know it, are in distress; the pay
 “ of the troops is in arrear; the defenders of the country
 “ are delivered over to the horrors of nakedness; their cou-
 “ rage is enervated by the sad sentiment of their wants;
 “ disgust, which is the consequence, brings on desertion;
 “ the hospitals are without necessaries, without fuel,
 “ and without medicines; the establishments of charity
 “ exposed to a similar desolation, reject the indigent and
 “ the infirm, for whom they had been the only re-
 “ maining resource. The creditors of the state, the con-
 “ tractors who furnish necessaries to the armies, can only
 “ obtain small parts of the sums which are due to them;
 “ their distress deters others who might execute the same
 “ services with more exactness, and with less expence;
 “ the public roads are destroyed, the communications in-
 “ terrupted; the public functionaries are without salaries,
 “ from one end of the Republic to the other. We see the
 “ judges and the administrators, reduced to the horrid al-
 “ ternative either of dragging on with misery their own ex-
 “ istence

“istence and that of their families, or of submitting to dishonour by selling themselves to corruption; every where malevolence is active; in many places assassination is organized, and the police without energy, without force, because deprived of pecuniary means, cannot stop these disorders.”

Such my lords, (said lord Auckland in conclusion) is the avowal of the French Directory! such is the acknowledged state of that country which has the presumption to expect from us an implicit submission to her insolence and madness; and which prescribes to us principles of pacification absurd and extravagant in their purport, dishonourable with regard to our Allies, subversive of the future balance of power in Europe, dangerous to our naval superiority, destructive to our commerce, calculated only to give a permanent triumph to the unexampled wickedness of the French revolution, and eventually destructive of the whole system of civil government among mankind!

Earl Fitzwilliam arraigned the conduct of ministers for the surrender of the original principle of the war, and said, that he could neither support the motion for the address, nor the amendment. He insisted that the enemy had given no encouragement for opening the late negotiation. They had never retracted the inadmissible principle advanced in the note to Mr. Wickham, nor the offensive decree of November 1792, encouraging the people of other countries to rise up against their established governments. No circumstance had occurred to convince him that their former proud and dangerous principle did not now exist in all its force. He insisted there could be no safety in fraternizing with such people; and illustrated his argument by referring to the conduct of France towards Genoa, Tuscany, &c. He said, he should, after the present motion was disposed of, move another amendment, in which he should endeavour to rally the House back to its principles, and to declare that this country could not, consistently with its own security, cease to prosecute the war until France should have subsided into a state of safe civilization.

Lord Hay (Earl of Kinnoul) avowed his independency, and declared, that he came to meet the discussion of this question, without giving way to any bias or prejudice. The conduct of the enemy, in the course of this negotiation, he considered as insolent in the extreme, and such as ought to be resisted. If the conduct of the French Directory betrayed an aversion to treat on fair and equitable principles, no-

thing in his opinion, remained for this country, but, by the continuance of hostilities, to bring them to a calm and sober discussion. The conduct of this country towards France, was manly and ingenuous. No sooner did Britain discover that it possessed a government capable of negotiating, than his Majesty's ministers, disdaining all lesser considerations, and laying aside those feelings which the conduct of the enemy tended to provoke, acted with real dignity, in their offers to meet that people and government with proposals of peace on equitable terms. The terms which France had formerly insisted on, in answer to Mr. Wickham's note, were, indeed, totally inadmissible, and contrary to the laws of nations; but notwithstanding this and other discouragements, Lord Malmesbury, without returning invective by invective, succeeded in establishing the general principle of mutual compensation; yet, almost as soon as this principle was admitted, it was retracted and rejected, by what he might call, the *ultimatum* of the enemy; for, upon this question of compensation, no sooner was the enemy's relinquishing the Netherlands (their possession of which was most dangerous to this country) introduced, than the government of France refused to enter into any discussion, and broke off all further negotiation. Nothing therefore, in his lordship's opinion, remained but for this country to exert its vigour, and he trusted there would be found in it, sufficient zeal to prosecute the war, rather than submit to dishonourable and dangerous conditions of peace.

The Duke of Bedford insisted that his Majesty's ministers had substituted assertions instead of arguments, and even these were in some respects contradictory. By one, the attempt at negotiation was spoken of in a manner suited to its solemnity, and by another, it was treated as a mere experiment, calculated to amuse a few of the people of this country; one minister lamented the unsuccessfulness of the steps taken towards pacification; another observed, that some danger arose from the negotiation itself; whilst, by another, it was asserted, that the French Republic was determined at all events to continue the war. By one, it was stated, that their finances were in a ruinous condition; and that noble lord had, in a speech last session, given a triumphant statement of our commerce, and revenues, which it was clear was in some particulars an erroneous statement, as it appeared differently in his printed speech. The inference obviously meant to be impressed, was that the resources of the enemy were exhausted; whilst their determination

to continue the war went to prove that they still had resources left. The noble secretary had reflected on the French Directory for refusing to treat in a manner contrary to the constitution and treaties they had formed; whilst he confidently asks: "Would you have this country violate its treaties with its Allies?" One noble lord argues, that the negotiation was not broken off in consequence of any objection occurring in the discussion itself, but on account of the basis on which that discussion was to proceed, whilst another declares, that that basis had been laid down by them as the principle on which they had always offered to treat. Of these he was confident and feared no contradiction. His grace proceeded to animadvert on the conversation between Lord Malmesbury and M. Delacroix, and inferred, that his lordship, by hinting at an equivalent for the Netherlands, had in a manner admitted the plea of the Directory, and that, in contradiction to the treaties subsisting between Great Britain and her Allies; the French minister at the same time, by conversing about an equivalent, proved that he virtually admitted some equivalent might be given. His opinion, his grace declared, was, that the Netherlands might be given up for an adequate consideration. Lord Malmesbury, he observed, had requested a *contre projet*, whilst, at the same time, he persisted in refusing to enter upon any treaty in which the French were to retain possession of the Netherlands. From these circumstances, as well as that of lord Malmesbury being left without a discretionary power in any matter of importance, his grace inferred, that ministers were not sincere in the proposed negotiation for peace. He thought, that before a renewal of the negotiation, ministers ought to have satisfied themselves that the French Directory had departed from the principle they avowed, when they refused to treat with Mr Wickham. In his opinion, ministers had not only created suspicions as to the sincerity of their intentions, but even afforded just grounds for accusation. They had acted on a principle of augmenting the power of great states, at the expence of those which were weaker; such, he said, was their idea of remunerative justice! by consenting to such a principle, Europe would sink into a miserable labyrinth of despotic arrogance; "a principle, on which" said his grace, "I shall make no comment, but leave it to your consciences to decide."

Lord Auckland said in reply, that when the noble duke so loudly professed that he was not afraid of contradiction, he ought at least to be afraid of giving just cause for contradiction. The noble duke, therefore, would learn with concern that he had totally misconceived the fact, when he sup-

posed him (lord Auckland) to have considered and stated the late negotiation "as an experiment to amuse a few people". He had not stated it as a mere political experiment which might do good without much risk of mischief. On the contrary, he had said, and he could appeal to all who now heard him, that it was an experiment necessary to shew to these kingdoms, and to all Europe, that the calamities of the war are prolonged by the obstinacy of the enemy, from whose wickedness the war had originated.

The noble duke had also stepped out of the present debate somewhat irregularly, to attack him for a speech which he had made in a former session respecting the prosperous situation of our commerce, navigation, and revenues. The noble duke had been pleased to say, that some of the particulars delivered on that occasion were erroneous. If it were meant to imply that there were intentional misstatements, he denied that such an assertion was founded. Useful and excellent accounts of the comparative circumstances of the kingdom had been frequently published in the course of the last 30 years. The statements which he had submitted to their lordships in the last session were for 1796, and the particulars were taken either from papers at the time upon the table, or from other official documents of the day. He had afterwards printed them to shew their accuracy and to subject it to the test of discussion.

It certainly was a pleasing task to him to dwell upon the well-founded proof of the prosperity and resources of the country; and therefore he begged leave to advert to a circumstance which had escaped him when he spoke before in the present debate. A noble earl had talked of the depopulation of Birmingham, and of the general increase of bankruptcies. As to the first of those points, it was quite new to him, and he could at present only express his belief that it had been greatly exaggerated and mistated to the noble earl. As to the other point he was well prepared to assert that the noble earl had been much misinformed. The fact is that bankruptcies are fewer at present than in any former period. And for the truth of this assertion he could refer to the learned Lord on the Woolfack, who could best bear testimony to this proof of our prosperity.

The *Lord Chancellor* left the woolfack,

Lord *Spencer* rising at the same time, the *Lord Chancellor* gave way. The Earl said, after what had passed he could not give a silent vote. He denied that Lord Malmesbury's conversation with M. Delacroix was to be regarded, either

as the basis of the negotiation, or the cause of its being broken off. The question, his lordship thought, might be reduced within a narrow compass, and was simply this, whether any country which wishes to maintain its independence, could go on with a negotiation on the plan adopted by the French Directory? He denied the charge of insincerity in the conduct of ministers. Had this been the fact, they would have adopted another mode; instead of which, they had persevered in their attempts to restore peace, notwithstanding all the obstacles which the enemy threw in the way. Though he could not allow that they were chargeable with any act of humiliation, neither would he admit that they had omitted the very first opportunity to manifest the sincerity of their disposition to restore the blessings of peace. From the moment that he first thought it right to give his support to his Majesty's ministers to the utmost of his power, as well as since he became one of the King's responsible servants, his lordship declared that he had acted from one uniform principle; he considered that the objects for which the war had been begun, and carried on, were, to secure the important interests of this country, to restore tranquillity to Europe, and to provide for the maintenance of that tranquillity; and though the French Directory had thought fit to put a violent end to that negotiation, the object and views of his Majesty's ministers still continued the same. He could not he said admit that Lord Malmesbury in his conversation with M. Delacroix, had proposed any *ultimatum*: the last note of the Directory was actually the beginning of the negotiation on their part; and what was their proposal? "You shall accept the basis of our new-formed constitution, which engrafts a conquered country into an integral part of our territories." Were the laws and constitution of France to be paramount to the laws of Europe? The principle advanced by France would go to subvert all the known, recognised, and established laws of nations. Thus, whilst the Directory are requiring an *ultimatum* from us, they are, in fact, giving one themselves. The only question now for consideration was, whether this country, by relinquishing the further prosecution of the war, would give up every thing valuable to its interests; every principle of good faith with its Allies; and abandon what has hitherto been reckoned the public law, not only of Europe, but of all civilized nations. By adhering to one consistent principle, he did not yet despair of bringing our enemies to a better sense
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of what they owed to themselves, and the tranquillity of Europe.

The *Duke of Bedford* explained, and admitted Lord Auckland's explanation respecting the late negotiation being an experiment to be correct, declaring that he had misunderstood the noble lord.

The *Lord Chancellor* left the Woolfack, to call their lordships attention to the form and purport of the amendment, that had been moved by the noble Earl who spoke second in the debate; an amendment so singular in its nature and so extraordinary in its tendency, that having occasion from his situation in that House to read it to their lordships, it excited his surprize somewhat more perhaps than it had surprized the House, who might not have listened to it attentively. He verily believed a similar instance could not be produced from the annals of the British History, of an amendment brought forward at the important crisis of a negociation for peace abruptly put an end to (no matter how) and that circumstance communicated to Parliament from the Throne, the apparent object of which amendment was to declare that the House were determined to withhold their support (Lord *Guildford*, and the *Duke of Bedford* nodded their assent) to his Majesty in the continuance of the war. His lordship said, he saw that such was not merely its apparent, but the avowed object of it. Was it possible for a House of Parliament at all attentive to the respect due to the Sovereign, and to their just regard for the interests of his people, when his Majesty threw himself upon them for support, to refuse to assure him of their cordial concurrence in every possible means of evincing their attachment to his royal person, their zeal for the maintenance of his crown and dignity, and their firm determination to preserve the honour and rights of the British nation. Could any gloomy imagination suppose such an amendment could be adopted? What, his lordship asked, would be the effect of it in this country, and throughout Europe! He insisted that the amendment in detail was no other than an exaggeration of the power of the enemy, encouraging to them, and depressing to the interests of this country. The inference to be drawn from it was, that this country must submit to whatever terms the enemy chose to impose; it tended to humble the nation before the Executive Directory, and to invite them to put their feet upon our necks. The *Lord Chancellor* denied the noble earl's (*Guildford*) assertion, that the memorial presented to the French Directory was of sophistical nature, for what he would ask, could contain in plain

plain terms, a more ingenuous declaration of what England was disposed to surrender, and what to demand in behalf of her allies? But, whatever might be the relative value of the compensation proposed, they had never, in fact, been brought under discussion. The proposals of England towards the enemy were numerous and liberal; though France had made no conquests from us, yet England proposed to surrender back all the conquests made from that power, or only on condition of her making suitable returns, of the conquests made from the Emperor; nor ought the proffered surrender to be under valued. His Lordship remarked, that the government of France had made no reply to the memorial which had been presented; the question of reciprocal compensations had never been fairly discussed; instead of this, they required an *ultimatum* within 24 hours; and, in the very act of doing so, they recal the very basis of the negotiation, to which they had previously agreed. He would put out of view the insolence and arrogance of the language they had used, and content himself with observing, that their whole conduct and language discovered on their part a determination to avoid all discussion. Thus, said his Lordship, have the government of France barred and double barred the door of Negotiation against you. Was the House prepared to send up this Amendment to the Crown, in preference to declaring that they would not submit to a proud and arrogant enemy? Would they not rather shew that their spirit was equal to the occasion, till such time as the enemy was brought to discover a better tone of feeling, and to hold a more pacific language.

Having been personally appealed to by a noble friend of his, to say whether a noble Earl (Lord Derby) was not erroneous in his assertion that bankruptcies were daily encreasing, he must for a moment put himself into the Court of Chancery, and declare to their Lordships, that he knew the reverse to be the fact. In the present year, the number was rather more than one-fifth less than the average of the last twelve years. Until the beginning of December this year, the number was 724, and there might be about 40 or 50 more since; in all less than 800, whereas the average number of the last twelve years was about 1040. The wealth of this country was also encreasing; this, his Lordship inferred from the surplus of monies brought into the treasury of the Court of Chancery, amounting to 960,000*l.* of which he computed about a clear surplus of 800,000*l.* of actual wealth, wealth saved during the current year. He ridiculed the idea of

4000 houses in Birmingham being uninhabited out of 6000, the computed amount of those in the town, and said, at no period were the manufactories more capital or flourishing than at present, nor was there any year in which the quantity of English goods exported was greater. Our national wealth and prosperity were immense. Subscriptions to the loan of 18 millions had been sent up to a large amount from various country towns, even after the loan was filled up. Let this be fairly contrasted with the statement of France as given by the Directory themselves, in the extract read by his noble friend (Lord Auckland). His Lordship concluded, by again insisting, that at no former period of English history, when negotiations were broken off, particularly the conferences at Gertruydenberg) did those who then opposed the ministry ever think of bringing forward a motion like "that thing" which he then held in hand.

The *Earl of Derby* rose to explain, and asserted that what he stated of the declining manufactories was but too true. Living in the county that he did, so near to Manchester, he could vouch for the fact, that he had stated, viz. that the manufactories would only allow their men to work a reduced number of hours in the day, on account of the diminution of orders, and if the noble and learned Lord took his idea of the increase of our trade and commerce, from the amount of exports, he was egregiously deceived, as it was a notorious fact, that the greater part of the British manufactures exported within the past twelve months, were now laying in warehouses abroad unsold, particularly at Hamburgh, and that such as had been sold had been sold frequently at a loss of 25 *per cent.* With regard to the number of uninhabited houses at Birmingham, he had been informed that 4000 out of 16000 houses (for that was the number he had stated, were uninhabited) and he had no reason to doubt the fact.

Lord *Hay* (Earl of Kinnoul) said, in the part of the country in which he lived, every thing afforded proofs of encreasing manufacture and encreasing commerce. His Lordship mentioned the linen manufacture and the quantity of broads made in the course of the last twelve months, as undeniable evidence of the extent of his assertion.

The *Earl of Guildford* said, after having been so fully indulged before, he would not long trespass on the time of the house, but he thought it necessary to declare that he had not heard a single argument to induce him to alter his opi-

nion or think less of the expediency and propriety, much more so meanly of "the *thing*, which the noble and learned Lord held in his hand," as the noble Lord appeared to do, and therefore he should persist in desiring their Lordships to decide upon it.

The *Earl of Abingdon* said, he was an advocate for monarchy, and had supported ministers as long as he could, with due regard to what he owed his country, as an Englishman; but in the late negotiation, he did not believe they had been sincere, and had the Directory of France been willing to trust them, they would in his opinion have concluded merely a hollow truce, a *sheer peace*, rotten at the foundation, whatever gloss it might carry in its appearance. Though an Antigallican born, he must say, he thought the conduct of the French Directory open and manly, while that of our ministers was very much the contrary. He quoted the apostle who says, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child, but when I became a man, I put away childish things." Not so with the minister in whom he saw much of the *ingenium puerile*, but little or nothing of the *senectutis sapientia* of old Chatham.

The question being called for, a division took place on the amendment:

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Proxies	-	-	-	-	23
					86
Majority against the amendment	-	-	-	-	78

As soon as the proxies had been named and counted, and the numbers declared,

Earl Fitzwilliam rose and entered into a long argument preparatory to his proposed amendment; he took a cursory review of the transactions of the war, and compared them with the principles on which ministers had originally commenced it, in order to prove that they by no means corresponded, and that noble friends of his who had agreed to support ministers in the prosecution of the war, could no longer give them their support with any sort of consistency. He singled out different measures and enterprises against the enemy that had been pursued against the French, as proofs of the want of wisdom that marked its conduct. He particularly reprobated the expedition to Quiberon, as an instance of error, for ever to be deplored. The emigrant corps sent on

that expedition were, he said, made up of wretches chiefly taken out of jails, the very scum of French emigration. The one hundred and thirty nobles chosen for their officers were, he admitted, well chosen, but it was a pity to send out such respectable men at the head of a set of well known republicans, ripe for treachery and every species of baseness of which the most depraved were capable. He alluded to what passed and had been stated by Sir John Borlace Warren previous to the troops landing, and after much reasoning upon it, referred to his Majesty's speech in 1794, and his declaration at the same period, contending that nothing had happened since to put France in a better state, so as to warrant our negotiating with her. He reminded their Lordships of the insulting notification of the French Directory which had been alluded to, and which the Directory had thought proper to publish at the very first prospect of a negotiation with Great Britain, and asked, if any man in his senses could have after that imagined, that the Directory was seriously inclined to listen to any terms that this country could propose. Having argued closely upon these points, his Lordship concluded with moving the following amendment :

After proposing to thank his Majesty for ordering the necessary papers to be laid before the House, the amendment proceeds to state—

“ That, not doubting a secure, permanent, and honourable peace, to have been ever his Majesty's object and anxious desire in this, as in every other war, we are however, convinced, by the beginning, progress, and events of the late negotiation, that no future attempt of a similar kind on our part can be wise, decorous, and safe, until the common enemy shall have abandoned his hostile disposition to all other states, by ceasing to place his own internal regulations above the publick law of Europe, to insist that all others shall, in all cases, sacrifice the faith of their alliance, and the protection of their ancient and dearest interests to the maintenance of his treaties, and the gratification of his ambition, and forever to appeal to the people against their own lawful government.

“ That our present experience only induces us more steadily to renew our former adherence to his Majesty's royal declaration of his great and beneficent views in October 1793, which he was graciously pleased to communicate to us at the opening of the following session in January 1794.

“ That we shall never consider the possessors of the power in France (under whatever name or external form of government that power may be exercised) as capable of maintaining the ordinary relations of peace and amity, until they shall have disclaimed in conduct, no less than in words, that system, which having emanated from the original principle of the French revolution, still continues to operate in a more dangerous, because in a more specious form, and which in

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its address to his Majesty. in January 1794, this House described as "a system disposing arbitrarily of the lives and property of a numerous people, violating every restraint of justice, humanity, and religion,"—"equally incompatible with the happiness of that country, and with the tranquillity of all other nations."

"That we now, as then, entreat his Majesty to be persuaded that in all our deliberations we shall bear in mind the true grounds and origin of the war;" that we shall "ever remember with just indignation the attack made on his Majesty and his allies, grounded on principles which tend to destroy all property, to subvert the laws and religion of every civilized nation, and to introduce universally a wild and destructive system of rapine, anarchy, and impiety," and "that we shall, on our parts, persevere with union and vigour in our exertions," still more than ever "sensible, that by discontinuing or relaxing our efforts, we could hardly procure even a short interval of delusive repose, and could certainly never obtain either security or peace."

Earl Spencer rose to reply, and assured their Lordships he would not long detain the House. He thought it necessary to declare that, when he felt it his duty as a friend to his country to give his support to government, previous to his being a member of administration, as well as since he had the honour to serve his Majesty, he did so because he thought France the unprovoked aggressor, and that the war was not only just and necessary, but also unavoidable. His principles had not however at any one period led him the extreme length, to which the noble Earl's argument went. With regard to the conduct of ministers, he was able to say, indeed he found himself bound to declare, that in the late negotiation they had done their utmost to effect, what his Majesty had most sincerely at heart, an earnest and anxious desire to restore this country and all Europe to peace, on terms equally just, honourable and solid. Having thus explained his own sentiments he must give his vote against the amendment proposed by the noble Earl.

Lord *Grenville* said, he perfectly concurred in the opinion which his noble friend had just delivered, and reminded the noble Earl who had moved the amendment, that so far from his Majesty's ministers having ever adopted the extravagant idea of waging a *bellum internecionis* against France, that they had repeatedly disavowed any such intention, and that a noble Earl (the late Earl of Mansfield) whose loss they must all deplore, had in the very last session of parliament refuted the calumny, and proved that no expressions of that kind had ever escaped the lips of his Majesty's ministers, but that they fell from a noble Duke (the Duke of Grafton) not then

present. His Lordship said, he should certainly vote against the amendment.

The question was put upon the amendment and the *not contents* had it.

The *Duke of Bedford* rose, and declared his conviction, that this country could neither enjoy peace nor prosperity without a change of men and measures. His intention was therefore to make a motion to that effect; but previous to this, he should move for an enquiry into the state of the nation. He proposed therefore to make his motion on Monday fortnight, and moved that the Lords be summoned for that day.

Lord *Grenville* said, he had no manner of objection to the enquiry proposed by the noble Duke, but should be ready to meet it, whenever it should be brought forward. He objected however to the day proposed, and therefore moved to alter it to an earlier day.

The *Duke of Bedford* objected to any alteration.

Lord *Grenville* withdrew his amendment, and the question was put on the Duke of Bedford's motion and the *not contents* had it.

The *Duke of Bedford* said, that after the decision the House had just come to, he felt himself entitled to alter the form of his intended motion, as well as the day for which he had given notice.

Lord *Grenville* then moved, that the House adjourn to Tuesday the 14th day of February. Ordered.

The House then adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, December 30.

Mr. *Whitbread* said, that as it was generally known that a subsidiary treaty at present existed, and had done so for some time, between his Majesty and the Prince of Hesse Darmstadt, he was very much surprized so long a time should have elapsed without such treaty, or a copy thereof, having been laid on the table of that House. He therefore hoped the honourable the Chancellor of the Exchequer would explain the reason why that treaty had not been laid before the House.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said that by some unexpected circumstances which had occurred, the ratifications made had not been exchanged, which he believed was the reason why that treaty had not been laid before the House.

Mr.

Mr. *Whitbread* moved, that a copy of the subsidiary treaty above-mentioned, signed on the 9th June, 1796, be laid before the House.

Agreed to.

Mr. *Whitbread* then said, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given repeated proofs that he was determined on every occasion, that he thought proper, to send the money of the people of this country out of the nation, for the purpose of subsidizing foreign princes, or for any other purposes which he liked, without the knowledge or consent of parliament. The nature of this treaty led him to suppose, that amongst the rest of the princes, to whom money had in this way been remitted, there must almost of course be some to the Prince of Hesse Darmstadt. He therefore moved—

“That an account be laid before the House of such sums, if any there were, as had been issued to the Prince of Hesse Darmstadt, in consequence of the said treaty.” Agreed to.

HIS MAJESTY'S MESSAGE.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* moved the order of the day for taking into consideration his Majesty's message; it being accordingly read from the chair, he addressed the House to the following effect :

I am perfectly aware, Sir, in rising upon the present occasion, that the motion which I shall have the honour to propose to the House, in consequence of his Majesty's most gracious message and founded upon the papers with which it was accompanied, involves many great and important considerations. Whatever difference of opinion may be entertained upon some of the topics which they contain, I am sure there will exist only one sentiment with regard to the event which they announce. We must all concur in that deep and poignant regret which is naturally excited by the information that the negociation, in which his Majesty was engaged, is abruptly broken off, a negociation by which we fondly wished, and perhaps might have sanguinely hoped, that upon terms of peace, which it would have been wise and prudent, and honourable in this country to have embraced, we should at length have been enabled to have retired from a contest undertaken in compliance with the faith of treaties and for the defence of our allies; undertaken to repel the daring, and unprincipled, and the unprovoked aggression of the enemy; undertaken for the maintenance of our own independence and the support of our own rights; undertaken for the preservation of our constitution and laws, and in obedience to these principles of policy by
which

which the conduct of England has so long and so gloriously been directed ; undertaken from a union of all these causes and a combination of all these motives, to a degree for which the annals of the world present no parallel. From the documents of which the House are now in possession, and from the proceedings of which they are now enabled to judge, I trust it will appear, that if it was thought necessary to embark in the contest upon such urgent grounds and such powerful considerations, his Majesty's ministers have evinced a perseverance equally sincere in their endeavours to restore peace to Europe upon fair, just, and honourable grounds, in spite of the discouragements under which they laboured, and the difficulties with which they had to encounter. To whatever cause however the failure of the negotiation is to be ascribed, it must be matter of regret to all, and to none more than to myself. Whatever subject of personal anxiety I may have had, in addition to the common feelings of humanity and for the general happiness of mankind, my sentiments are only those of disappointment. But I feel with conscious satisfaction that this feeling of disappointment is unaccompanied with any reflection, unmingled with regret, unembittered with despondency, as it must be evident to the world, that the event which we deplore can be attributed only to the pride, the ambition, the obstinacy, and the arrogant pretensions of the enemy. I feel this consolation annexed to the task which we have now to perform, that we can come forward, not unaware of the difficulty, yet not dismayed by the prospect, prepared to review the situation in which we are placed, to ask what are the causes from which the failure of the negotiation proceeded, what opinion it authorises us to form, what conduct it requires us to pursue, what duty it imposes upon us to discharge, and what efforts we are called upon to exert in our own defence, and what support and assistance policy demands that we should grant to our allies for the vigorous and effectual prosecution of a contest in which we are compelled to persevere? I do not know, whether the same unanimity will prevail upon the other point, which, though not so self evident indeed, is hardly more complicated in its nature. If in that necessity to which we are now subjected, of pursuing with vigour the war in which we are engaged, we can look for consolation amid the sacrifices with which it will be attended, to the original aggression of the enemy by which it was occasioned, to the consideration that no endeavour has been omitted which can evince our earnest and sincere desire of peace, that this sentiment still predominates to put
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an end to the contest upon those principles which alone can render that event desirable, which can secure a peace, safe, honourable, and permanent, which can restore those blessings which it is calculated to produce, and those advantages for which it is worthy to be desired. If we have adhered to these considerations we have done every thing which it was in our power to perform, we have qualified ourselves for your confidence, by an attention to the principles, by which such a peace as this can only be attained. If we lament the failure of his Majesty's exertions upon this occasion, at least we have not to regret that they have been wholly without advantage. They must prove to which party the prolongation of the war is to be imputed; they will tend at once to unite England and to divide France; they will animate our endeavours with new energy and new confidence, while they must have the effect to enfeeble and to embarrass the operations of the enemy. The question is not merely how far his Majesty's ministers and those to whose province it is committed to judge of the terms upon which peace ought to be concluded, and what offers are to be proposed, a duty always attended with difficulty, but in the present circumstances, peculiarly embarrassed and unusually critical, acted properly in the conditions upon which they were willing to treat. After the propositions which were made had been rejected; when, instead of yours, terms utterly inadmissible and glaringly extravagant were substituted; when, to a preremptory rejection was added the refusal of all farther discussion; when the negotiation was abruptly broken off and his Majesty's ambassador was sent away; when all this is accompanied with a proceeding still more insulting than the original dismissal, when a condition is reserved, which is not even the semblance, but which stands undisguised as the most glaring mockery of negotiation, it remains for the House to judge whether any thing has been wanting upon the part of ministers, whether any thing more is required to display the sentiments and the views of the enemy. It remains to be seen whether there are any gentlemen in this House, who, as friends to peace, as friends to their country, who, consistent with the principles of statesmen, or the feelings of patriots, can discover any alternative in the ultimate line of conduct to be pursued. From the manner in which what I have now said has been received, I hope it will not be incumbent upon me to dwell more particulatly upon this topic, before I advert to others which come previously to be considered. The two leading points

points which arise from the views connected with the subject in discussion, are, the sentiment which it is proper to express upon the steps taken by his Majesty for the purpose of obtaining peace, and then combining the offers made with the rejection of the enemy, and the circumstances with which it was accompanied, what sentiment parliament and the nation ought to entertain, with regard to the conduct necessary to be adopted for our own security, for maintaining the cause of our allies, and protecting the independence of Europe. After the communications which have already been made of the former steps taken by this country, and on the part of the Emperor for the purpose of bringing the contest to a termination, it would be unnecessary to dwell upon the particulars of these transactions. I would beg leave, however, to remind the House, that in March 1796, offers were made to the French government, by his Majesty's envoy at Basle, Mr. Wickham, to treat for a general peace, in a manner which of all others had been most usual in a complicated war, a mode sanctioned by custom and justified by experience, which had been commonly found successful in attaining the objects for which it was intended; yet this proposal met with a refusal, and was affected to be received as a mark of insincerity. We find the enemy advancing a principle, to which I shall afterwards more particularly advert; so manifestly unjust, and so undeniably absurd, that whatever difference of opinion subsisted upon other points there was no man living had the temerity to support it. The question upon the former discussions to which this transaction gave rise, was, whether the principle to which I allude was fairly imputed? In the answer to Mr. Wickham's note, when we found the government of France advancing a law of her own internal constitution, to cancel the obligation of treaties, and to annul the public law of Europe, the only doubt was, whether it was fair and candid, upon such a foundation, to ascribe to the Directory the reality of such a pretension? The principle itself I am sure can never be successfully defended upon any law of nations or any argument of reason. The Emperor too, in spite of the refusal with which the application of this country had been received; in spite of the discouragement which a new attempt presented, did, at the opening of the campaign, renew the offers for negotiating a general peace upon the principles upon which the proposition of this country had been founded. In the course of this eventful year, so chequered with remarkable vicissitudes, before the successes of the enemy, which unfortunately

unfortunately so rapidly followed the breaking of the armistice, and before the glorious tide of victory by which the latter period of the campaign had been distinguished, many instances occurred for the application of their principle. The proposition of the Emperor however, was received nearly in the same manner with our own; and even the answer which it produced was conceived in the same tone, and conveyed the same unfounded imputation, excepting that there were some topics with regard to points of etiquette and differences about form. which upon the application of this country, had not been observed, till they were renewed upon the perusal of reports of certain proceedings in this House, whether faithfully detailed or not I will not enquire. The answer which the Emperor received was, that he might send a Plenipotentiary to Paris to treat for a peace, consistent with the laws and constitution of the republick. Notwithstanding the discouragement which the repeated experience of former disappointments was calculated to produce, his Majesty retaining that desire of putting a period to hostilities by which he was uniformly animated, felt some hope from the distress to which France was reduced, and from the embarrassments under which she laboured, that a renewed proposal would be welcomed with a more friendly reception. To shew that the inveterate disposition which the enemy had manifested did not discourage his Majesty from giving another chance of success to his ardent wishes, without having witnessed any indication upon their part of sentiments more pacific or more conciliatory, without their having discovered any retraction of the principles which had been advanced in reply to his first proposal, his Majesty determined to try the experiment of a new attempt of negotiation, to the circumstances of which I shall again recur. Upon many occasions during the present contest it had been discussed, whether it was politic for this country to appeal to negotiation in whatever circumstances the enemy were placed? Gentlemen on the other side were accustomed to press the argument, that in no situation could negotiation be humiliating. If a sincere desire of peace, it was said, does exist, there are modes of ascertaining the dispositions of the enemy, of making your wishes known, and making advances to the attainment of the object without involving any question of etiquette or provoking any discussion of forms.—Of all the modes then recommended, that of application through the medium of a neutral minister, was the most approved. After the reception which the successive proposals of this country

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and of the Emperor, received at Basle, the mode of application by a neutral power, by that very power which had been again and again cited as an instance of the good faith of the French government, and their respect for independent states, was at length adopted, and the Danish minister was pitched upon for this purpose. In this proceeding it was not the object to announce on what terms this country was willing to conclude a peace, not to avoid any objections of etiquette, not to evade any discussion of preliminary formalities, but merely to ascertain the point, whether the Directory would grant passports to a confidential person whom his Majesty was willing to send to Paris. The application was accordingly made by the Danish resident, and after an interval of some days' delay, this step was allowed to pass in silence; to a written application no answer was returned, and at last a verbal notification was given, that the Directory could not listen to any indirect application through the medium of neutral powers, and that a Plenipotentiary might proceed to the frontiers, and there wait for the necessary passports. I would now ask the House to judge, if it had really been the wish of his Majesty's ministers to avail themselves of the plausible grounds for proceeding no farther, which were then presented, which could so easily be justified by a reference to the conduct of the French government, and by the dispositions by which experience had proved them to be guided, would they have been very eager again to try the issue of new attempts? But even to this they submitted, and by a flag of truce sent to the governor of Calais, directly demanded the necessary passports. ---The Directory, now feeling the eagerness with which this country pursued the desire of terminating the contest by negotiation, and, foreseeing the odium with which the refusal would be attended, were compelled, I repeat, were compelled, to grant the passports, and thus to afford to his Majesty the opportunity of presenting the outline of the terms upon which peace might be restored. Under circumstances like these, with the experience of an uniform tenor of conduct which testified the very reverse of any disposition to a cordial co-operation for the re-establishment of peace, there was little hope that the French government would keep pace with the offers proposed by this country, and it was foreseen that it would rest with his Majesty, after stimulating their reluctant progress through every part of the discussion, to encounter the farther difficulty of proposing specific terms. In this embarrassing situation the first thing to be done was to
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endeavour to establish what is at once conformable to reason sanctioned by usage, and agreeable to universal practice since negotiation was first reduced to a system; I mean some basis upon which the negotiation was to be founded. How usual such a practice had been, it would be unnecessary to argue; how reasonable, it would be impossible to dispute; as it must be evident that such a mode of proceeding must conduce to abridge the delay with which a discussion of this kind is apt to be attended, to afford a clue to that labyrinth of complicated interests that are to be considered, and to supply some rule of stating mutual propositions. It would be equally unnecessary, as this mode was to be adopted in a negotiation where we, for ourselves directly, had so little to ask, and for our allies so much; and where the interests of Europe demanded such important claims; where we had to treat with a country which had advanced principles that destroyed all former establishments, that cancelled all received laws and existing treaties; that overthrew all experience of past proceeding. This basis then was to be a basis of compensation, not of ambition or aggrandisement, but that compensation which was due for the conquests achieved by the valour and perseverance of our forces from the acquisitions gained by the enemy; a basis than this I am confident more equitable, or more just, better calculated to secure the interests of our allies, to maintain the independence of Europe, or more honourable to this country, never was proposed. But whether this basis be reasonable or not, is not now so much the enquiry, as another proof of the views of the enemy is disclosed, and a fresh instance of the inveterate disposition of the French government is displayed. Before any explicit answer to the basis proposed was returned; when it was understood that it was to be rejected, Lord Malmesbury is required, within twenty-four hours, to present his *ultimatum*. It appears, however, from the able manner in which Lord Malmesbury conducted himself upon this demand, that this demand was not insisted upon, and to his explanation, they replied only by an evasive answer, which announced their refusal of the basis proposed, and intimated the extravagant pretensions they were desirous to substitute. I will now put to the recollection of the House the public discussions to which the subject of the basis of negotiation presented to the French government gave rise. I will not say that the public was unanimous, nor will I pretend to decide in what proportions it was divided. None, however, doubted that

this basis would not be agreed to. In the public discussion to which the plan was subjected (by this I do not mean parliamentary discussions) and in the writings which it produced, particularly in the Metropolis, the argument maintained was, that the principle was unreasonable, and ought not to have been offered. The Directory, however, thought proper to accept what it was argued in this country ought to have been refused, and the principle of compensation was admitted. Having, I trust, shewn therefore, from the extorted confession which arises out of every statement, that the basis of compensation was accepted, there follow the particular terms, as far as they were the subject of negotiation. It is a point well understood that the final terms to be considered as binding upon the parties, never form a part of the original proposition. What, however, is the case here? When the first advances were made by this country, they were met by no corresponding offers by the Directory, every difficulty that was started and removed, prepared only new evils; the demands made by us were accompanied by no disclosure of the terms to which they would accede. After a reluctant admission of the basis they insisted upon a specific statement of the objects of compensation. Under circumstances similar to those upon which the negotiation was begun, the difficulties with which it is attended must be obvious, and the common practice has been, as far as possible, to divide them, to render the statement of terms mutual, to give reciprocally, and at the same time, the explanations, the concessions, and the demands upon which each party is disposed to insist. The propriety of this is obvious. Without such a mode of proceeding it is impossible to know what value the one sets upon a particular concession, or a particular acquisition, and upon what conditions this is to be abandoned, and how the other is to be compensated. This difficulty obtains in all negotiations, more particularly where doubts are entertained of the sincerity of the party with whom you have deal, but most of all when no advance, no reciprocal offer is made. How difficult then must it have been under all the circumstances of this case to produce specific terms with any probability of success or advantage. Yet the same motives which had induced his Majesty on former occasions to surmount the obstacles presented by the enemy, induced him here likewise to remove every pretence of cavil. Plans were given in, signed by Lord Malmesbury, stating likewise terms for the allies of this country. In the outline, two things are to be kept

kept separate and distinct, the compensations demanded for our allies, and those which were intended to protect the balance of Europe. I need not argue again that a basis of compensation is reasonable; that I am entitled to assume as admitted; but to what enormous extent it was retracted, I am now to state. During that period of adverse fortune which has since by the valour and glory of the gallant Imperial army so remarkably been retrieved, considerable possessions belonging to Austria and other states were added to the acquisitions of the enemy. On the other, the success of our brave troops, retarded in particular quarters by some untoward circumstances, though not obstructed, had added to our distant possessions, and extended, by colonial acquisitions, the sources of our commerce, our wealth, and our prosperity, to a degree unparalleled even in the annals of this country. Feeling the pressure, which the war, no doubt, gave to our commerce, but feeling too that it neither affected the sources of our commerce, nor would ultimately retard the full tide of our prosperity, I was convinced that the temporary embarrassments which occurred, were less the effect of a real distress, than of an accidental derangement arising from our encreasing capital and extended commerce. In looking round you discovered no symptom of radical decay, no proof of consuming strength, and although I have been accused of advancing a paradox, while I advanced this proposition, I am convinced that the embarrassment stated as an evidence of decline, was a proof of the reality and the magnitude of our resources. This I do not advance as any reason for terminating the contest upon such equitable conditions as the interest of Europe, and the honour of this country might have accepted, if it could have been obtained, but I do it in order to shew that our resources are worth contending for, that we ought to submit to no surrender of the interests of Europe, or of the springs of our prosperity, and that we are not bereft of the means of continuing the exertions by which they are to be defended. But what a striking contrast does your situation exhibit to that of the enemy to whom you are opposed? While your temporary embarrassment are a proof of your real prosperity, the proofs of their ruin and misery entailed by the extraordinary expedients to which they had recourse, and which enabled them to carry the same devastation over so great a part of Europe, are at length arrived at a crisis which must preclude the possibility of continuing the system. Though the predictions which have been made upon this subject, may hitherto have
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been disappointed, yet the general position of the difficulties to which she was reduced, cannot be controverted by any one who looks attentively at France; and it will hardly be denied that the pressure has been felt more severely by her than by any other state. I will not revert to the speculations concerning the failure of that system, yet the progress of the causes of decay which it has produced are now felt by that country, though they have not been considered by her present rulers. I have sometimes been accused of relying upon far-fetched calculations, upon ingenious theories which were not applicable to the case, and proved nothing, and, I have been told, were contrary to the fact. When that country perseveres in the present contest, and in the means by which it is supported, not for any purpose of interest, not upon any pretence of self-defence, not upon any necessity which repelling unjust aggression might demand, but when they contend for purposes of undisguised ambition, for extended aggrandizement, for dictatorial principles of policy, I may be allowed to say, and upon the authority too of those who rule, that the resources of France are inadequate to her designs, and her means unequal to the support of her pretensions. After the distress which has been announced in every branch of their military service, when their finances are incompetent to the discharge of the interest of their debt, to the support of their charities, to the maintenance of their police, and, in short, for any thing but "the organization of assassination," and these are the words of a late message to one of the Legislative bodies. I am warranted to assert this is not a country to which Europe must suppliantly bow the knee, and from which it must ignominiously receive the law. If these considerations would not have justified this country in refusing to treat unless upon the principle of restoring to the Emperor the territories of which he has been stripped, at least it is sufficient reason to entitle us to refuse to the French Republic in the moment of debilitated power and exhausted resource, what we should have disdained to grant to France in the proudest days of her prosperous and flourishing Monarchy. It was reason enough why we should not desert our allies, nor abandon our engagements, and why we should not agree to yield up to France for the pretence of preventing future wars, what for two centuries our ancestors thought it wise to contend to prevent the French from obtaining possession; and why, after the recorded weakness of the Republic, we ought

ought not to resign without a struggle, what the power and the riches of France in other times could never extort. What then were we to attain by the conquests we had achieved? For ourselves, we had nothing to ask. Were we to stipulate to be allowed to retain our ancient possessions, and to enjoy our established constitution to resist every pretension to dictate to our internal policy? These do not rest upon the permission of the enemy; they depend upon the valour, the intrepidity, and the patriotism of the people of this country, which they will maintain without condition, and enjoy without dependence. The faith of treaties, to which we were pledged, and the inviolability of the engagements by which we were bound, could induce us to agree to such terms of peace alone which the interest of our allies and of Europe required. And could we then ask less than the restoration of the Emperor's possessions? I do not say how far it might have been possible to accept less, but whatever might have been the disposition of the Emperor to peace, would he have been content to agree to inferior terms, when the campaign was not yet closed, when the enemy were yet struck with the effects of the brilliant and glorious success with which the Imperial arms have lately been attended, when the exertions in Italy might have been expected to communicate to the affairs of Austria in that quarter, the same tide of victory by which the frontiers of Germany were distinguished? Could we have asked less, consistently with the good faith we owe to that ally, to whose exertions and to whose victories we have been so much indebted; that ally to whom we are so closely bound by congenial feelings, with whom we participate in the glory of adversity retrieved, and of prosperity restored? In doing this, I am confident the House will agree in thinking that we do not do too much. By the terms proposed, all the territory between the Rhine and the Moselle was to be ceded by France, subject to future modification. When the French conquests in Italy were stated as objects of restitution, it was not from that to be inferred that Savoy and Nice were to be included, for in no geographical view could they be considered as competent parts of that country. But though all the demands of concession were advanced under the principle of future modification and arrangement, the demand of the restitution of the Netherlands was considered as the point in which no relaxation would be admitted. But even these were to be subject to its application, provided no part of them was to be allotted to France. In the application
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of this principle, what was the conduct of this country? Not a partial, but a general offer of all the important conquests we had gained, was made under the articles of compensation to be given in return, and with a particular exception, If the basis of compensation then be admitted, was this a fair, just, and liberal offer, one that bespoke sincerity, which provided for the general interests of Europe, which invited free and candid discussion? The destructive system pursued by France with regard to her colonies, has no doubt greatly diminished the value of her settlements, as well in their present produce as to a certain degree in their future utility, but still if it is considered how much of the future commercial prosperity of that country must depend upon her regaining these conquests, and the value to which with care they may yet be raised, the worth of the compensations proposed by this country may then be estimated. St. Domingo, Martinique, St. Lucia, Tobago, offered to be restored, and in the view of real importance it may well be doubted whether it was not a bold step to propose so great a sacrifice? And were we not acting on principles of good faith to our ally, and for the general interests of Europe, instead of views of aggrandisement, it would be more natural to suspect the wisdom of the surrender, than to doubt the sincerity of the object. Still, however, under all these propositions the reserve is made of future discussion. With regard to the Spanish part of St. Domingo, the French government denies the fairness of this statement as an article of compensation, which they already claim upon a different principle. The French government pretend to keep it upon the footing of possession. But have they actually the possession? No. In all probability at this moment they have not a single inch of it. Have they right by title? No; for those from whom it was derived had no title to convey. You have the right to pronounce a negative upon that transaction, and yet the French talk of the solemn stipulation in the treaty of Utrecht as of no avail, and by a kind of reverse of prescription this treaty, forsooth, is to have no force because it has existed near a century, and Spain is to have the right to violate its engagements in 1796, because since the year 1713, they have maintained them with fidelity, engagements which have been renewed at every treaty concluded since that time, particularly in 1783. It is said that this treaty is not binding, because it was violated by this country in 1763; but can the cession of Pensacola, which was made by the agreement of the two parties, give either of them the right to transact separately with a third party what they are prohibited

hibited by treaties from doing? And I would ask the House whether in such circumstances the Spanish part of St. Domingo does not properly come in as an article of compensation? With regard to our allies, the terms proposed come next to be considered. Holland constrained by France to enter into the war, must now be considered as the enemy of this country. She cannot, however, forget that we were once connected as friends, and were it possible to restore Holland to her real rank in the scale of Europe, to her former importance, to her former state of security, could we withdraw her from the dominion of the principle by which she has been overwhelmed, perhaps we should not be very rigid in the settlements of the acquisitions we have made at her expence. But though in the consideration of Holland as a friend, it might be a question how they were to be given up, and whether in the view of security some of them might not be better in our custody than in her's, yet this point was now no longer to be taken as the standard by which we are to be guided.

The continental possessions which France has acquired from Holland, might perhaps be subject of discussion in what manner they were best to be arranged at once for the interest of Holland and of the allies. But these and the conquests made by this country, must be considered, in the view of restitution, as merely an addition to the French power. We ought to consider that the possessions with regard to which no relaxation was to be admitted, were to be retained, that they might not become acquisitions to the French government. In refusing to yield them up, we only refuse to put into the hands of the enemy the means of carrying into effect the deep laid schemes of ambition they have long cherished, and the plan they have conceived of undermining our Indian Empire, and destroying our Indian commerce. To the House, therefore, I again appeal, whether the unsolicited offer of concession, made by this country in the first moments of negotiation, was not a proceeding fair and candid, evincing at once the justice of our pretensions, and the sincerity of our views. In return to the statements of compensation proposed by this country, the French government presented no *project* of their own, they afforded no room for discussion, because they were actuated by motives very distant from conciliation. This much I have thought it necessary to state, in vindication of the character of myself and colleagues, and in defence of the conduct of the negotiation, that the House might be enabled to

judge how the object had been pursued, that they might see that we never lost sight of the idea of a peace advantageous for our allies, safe for Europe, and honourable to this country. With regard to any specific terms of peace, which it might be proper to adopt or refuse, I do not think it would be wise for the House to pronounce. This may still be considered as a dormant negotiation, capable of being renewed, and it would be impolitic to give a pledge to any specific terms which, in point of fact, has never been adhered to by parliament, and which has never been incurred without rashness. No man can be pledged to any particular terms, because in these he must be guided by a view of collateral circumstances, and a comparative statement of resources. All that I wish parliament to pronounce is, that they will add its testimony to the sincerity with which his Majesty endeavoured to restore peace to Europe, and its approbation of the steps which were employed for its attainment. But even after their rejection of every proposition that was advanced, after all the difficulties they started, after all the cavils they employed, after all the discouragements which they presented, after the French government had been compelled to open the discussion, the first thing that happens, after cavilling upon the note containing specific proposals, a captious demand is made to have it signed by Lord Malmesbury, which is complied with to deprive them of every pretence for breaking off the negotiation; they then demand an *ultimatum* in twenty-four hours. The impossibility of complying with such demand is obvious. Was it possible to reconcile discordancies, to smooth opposition, or promote good understanding in this manner? Does it come within the scope of the negotiation? Is an *ultimatum*, which means that demand which is to come the nearest to the views of all parties, and to state the lowest terms which could be offered, thus to be made out at random, without knowing what the enemy would concede on their part, or what they would prefer on ours? A proposal, drawn up in such a manner, without explanation, without information, could not succeed. It is a demand contrary to all reason and to all principle. With such a demand, therefore, it was impossible to comply, and in consequence of this lord Malmesbury received orders to quit Paris in forty-eight hours, and the territories of the Republic as soon as possible.

Perhaps, however, I shall be told that the negotiation is not broken off, and that the French government have pointed out

out a new basis upon which they are willing to proceed. There are two things upon this subject not unworthy of consideration. The time at which they propose this new basis, and what sort of basis it is that they mean to propose. After having approved and acted upon the basis proposed by his Majesty's government; after having acknowledged, and to all appearance cordially acquiesced in it, as the ground of negotiation; after having demanded an *ultimatum* at the very commencement of this negotiation, and before any discussion had taken place, to be delivered into the Directory, in the space of twenty-four hours; and after dismissing the ambassador of the King with every mark of ignominy and insult, they propose a new basis, by which the negotiation is to be carried on by means of couriers. And what is the reason they assign for this new basis? Because Lord Malmesbury acted in a capacity purely passive, and because he could assent to nothing without dispatching couriers to obtain the sanction of his court. Here one cannot help remarking the studied perverseness of the temper of the French government. When a courier was dispatched to Paris, at the instance of the minister of a neutral power, in order to get a passport from the French government, it was denied. A courier could not even obtain a passport, though the application was made to the Executive Directory through the medium of the Danish minister. The request of the Danish minister was not enough; nothing could satisfy them but a British minister. Well, a British minister was sent. At the commencement of the negotiation he had occasion frequently to send dispatches to his court, because it is very well known that there are a great number of difficulties which attend the opening of every negotiation, and because Lord Malmesbury had been sent to Paris before the preliminaries, which are usually settled by means of couriers, were arranged. While these preliminaries were in a course of settling, Lord Malmesbury's presence was barely endured, and the frequent dispatches of his couriers were subjects of animadversion, but no sooner were these preliminaries settled, and the British minister delivered in a *projet*, when there was less necessity for dispatches and couriers, when the period for discussion was arrived, when the personal presence of an ambassador was particularly necessary, and when the King's ministers announced to the French government that he was prepared to enter into discussion upon the official memorial containing his *projet*, then he was ordered to quit Paris and to leave the negotiation to be carried on by means of couriers. Such

is the precise form, and it was impossible to devise a better, in which a studied insult, refined and matured by the French Directory, was offered to his Britannic Majesty.

I now come to state the broad plain ground on which the question rests, in as far as the terms upon which they were invited to treat on this new basis are concerned. After having stated a variety of captious objections at the opening of the negotiation, after the preliminaries were with much difficulty adjusted, after an *ultimatum* was demanded, almost before discussion had commenced, after the King's minister was ordered in the most insulting manner to leave the territories of France, after a retraction by the Executive Directory of the original basis of negotiation and the substitution of a new one in its place, they demand not as an *ultimatum*, but as a preliminary, to be permitted to retain all those territories of which the chance of war has given them a temporary possession, and respecting which they have thought proper, contrary to every principle of equity and the received laws of nations, to pass a constitutional law, declaring, as they interpret it, that they shall not be alienated from the Republic. Now whether this be the principle of their constitution or not, upon which I shall afterwards have occasion to make some observations, it was at least natural to be supposed that the principle had been virtually set aside when the former basis of negotiation was recognized by the French Directory, for it must have been a strange admission of the principle of reciprocal compensation indeed, if they were obliged by the rules of their constitution to retain all those conquests which we were most bound in duty and in honour to insist upon their giving up, (not by any mystery of a new constitution, which is little known, and even among those who know it, of doubtful interpretation, but by public and known engagements) and if they were under the same constitutional necessity, which they certainly are, of demanding restitution of those colonies formerly in their possession, but which they have lost in the course of the war. Notwithstanding however, the disavowal of this principle in the admission of the former basis of the negotiation, it is now alledged as a ground for the pretension, that they are entitled as a matter of right to demand from this country, not as an *ultimatum*, but as a preliminary to the discussion of any articles of treaty, that we shall make no proposals inconsistent with the laws and constitution of France. I know of no law of nations which can in the remotest degree countenance such a perverse and monstrous claim. The
annexation

annexation of territory to any state by the government of that state, during the continuance of the war in which they have been acquired, can never confer a claim which supercedes the treaties of other powers, and the known and public obligations of the different nations in Europe. It is impossible, in the nature of things, that the seperate act of a seperate government can operate to the dissolution of the ties subsisting between other governments, and to the abrogation of treaties previously concluded. And yet this is the pretension to which the French government lays claim, and the acknowledgment of which they hold out not as an *ultimatum*, but as a preliminary of negociation to the King of Great Britain and his allies. In my opinion there is no principle of the law of nations clear than this, that when, in the course of war any nation acquires new possessions, that such nation has only an inchoate right to them, and that they do not become property till the end of the war. This principle is incontrovertible, and founded upon the nature of things. For, supposing possessions thus acquired to be immediately annexed to the territory of the state by which the conquest was made, and that the conqueror was to insist upon retaining them, because he had passed a law that they should not be alienated, might not the neighbouring powers, or even the hostile power, ask—Who gave you a right to pass this law? What have we to do with the regulation of your municipal law? Or, what authority have you, as a seperate state, by any annexation of territory to your dominions, to cancel existing treaties, and to destroy the equilibrium established among nations? Were this pretension to be tolerated, it would be a source of eternal hostility, and a perpetual bar to negotiation between the contending parties; because the pretensions of the one would be totally irreconcilable with those of the other. This pretensions in the instance of France, has been as inconsistent in its operations as it was unfounded in its origin. The possessions which they have lost in the West Indies in the course of the war, they made independent republicks, and what is still more singular, Tobago which they have lost in the war, and which is retained by British arms, is a part of indivisible France. I should not be surpris'd to hear that Ireland, in consequence of the rumour which has been circulated of their intention to attempt an invasion upon that country, is constitutionally annexed to the territories of the Republic, or even that the city of Westminster is a part of the indivisible France. There is a distinction, no doubt, between the
Netherlands

Netherlands and the West India islands, but it whimsically happens that this principle of law, that this constitutional pretension is least applicable to those possessions upon which it is held out as operating by the French government, and that the Austrian Netherlands, even by the letter of their own constitution, ought to be exempted from its operation. I own I am little qualified to read a lecture upon the French constitution, and perhaps I shall be accused, in my interpretation of it, of pretending to understand it better than they do themselves. Here I must remind my accusers, however, that even M. de la Croix, that great master of the law of nations, allows that, on this point, the constitution is not perfectly clear; and gives that particular interpretation of it upon the authority of the best publicists. I again repeat it—that, in discussing the terms of a treaty with France, I am not obliged to know either her constitution or laws, because it was unreasonable for her to advance a pretension upon a foundation inconsistent with the received law of nations and the established nature of things. But it will demonstrate their insincerity and the shallowness of the subterfuges to which they have been obliged to have recourse, if I can shew that no such law is in existence, and that their constitution leaves the government entirely at liberty to dispose of the possessions which they have acquired in war in any way they may think proper. I have looked through this voluminous code [holding a copy of the constitution in his hand], and I think it may be considered as an instance that a constitution upon paper, digesting and regulating the conduct of municipal jurisprudence as well as of foreign relations, does not lead to the best application of the true principles of political œconomy. In the copy of their constitution all I find upon the subject is a declaration that France is one and indivisible, which is followed by a long list of departments. And here I would recommend it to gentlemen to read the report upon which this decree was founded, in which they will find that it was passed for the avowed purpose of obtaining for France an indispensable ascendant in Europe, and of suppressing the trade and commerce of rival nations. Overlooking, however, the principle of the decree, if it was found inapplicable to the possessions of the French in the East and West Indies, which they had previous to the war, it was certainly much more inapplicable to the Austrian Netherlands, of which they have got possession in the course of the war, and therefore the government in holding out the principle as operating upon the latter

latter, and not upon the former, apply it to that part of their territory to which it is least applicable. If we look at the provisions under the next title, respecting relations with foreign powers, the argument against the existence of any such principle in their constitution is confirmed: for we find the executive government is there vested with the full power of treating, but all their treaties must be ratified by the legislative bodies, with the singular exception of secret articles, which it is in the power of the Directory to put in execution without being ratified, a proof that they are authorized by the constitution to alienate territories belonging to the Republic. Allowing however, that it is a principle of their constitution, is it an evil without a remedy? No. M. de la Croix confesses that it may be remedied, but not without the inconvenience of calling the primary assemblies. And are we then, after all the exertions that we have made in order to effect the object of general pacification, and after being baffled in all our efforts by the stubborn pride and persevering obstinacy of the French government, after our propositions have been slighted, and our ambassadors insulted, are we now to consent to sacrifice our engagements, and to violate our treaties, because forsooth, it would be attended with some inconvenience for them to call their primary assemblies, in order to cancel a law which is incompatible with the principle of fair negotiation? Shall we forget our own honour, our own dignity, and our own duty, so far as to acquiesce in a principle as a preliminary to negotiation, intolerable in its tendency, unfounded in fact, inconsistent with the nature of things, and inadmissible by the law of nations? But this is not all the sacrifice they demand. This is not all the degradation to which they would have us submit. You must also engage, and as a preliminary too, to make no propositions which are contrary to the laws of the constitution, and the treaties which bind the Republic. Here they introduce a new and extraordinary clause, imposing a restriction still more absurd and unreasonable than the other. The Republic of France may have made secret treaties which we know nothing about, and yet that government expects that we are not to permit our propositions to interfere with these treaties. In the former instance we had a text upon which to comment, but here we are in a state of those divines who were left to guess at the dreams which they were called upon to interpret. How is it possible for this country to know what secret articles there may be in the treaty between France and Holland? How
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can we know what the Dutch may have ceded to France, or whether France may not have an oath in heaven never to give up the territories ceded to her by Holland? Who can know but her treaty with Spain contains some secret article guaranteeing to the latter the restitution of Gibraltar, the island of Jamaica, or some important possession now belonging to his Majesty? And how can I know whether the performance of all these engagements may not be included under the pretension, which the French government now holds out? How is it possible for me to sound where no line can fathom? And even after you have acceded to these preliminaries, in what situation do you stand? After accepting of terms of which you are entirely ignorant, and giving up all that it is of importance for you to keep, you at last arrive at a discussion of the government which France may chuse to give to Italy, and of the fate which she may be pleased to assign to Germany. In fact the question is not how much you will give for peace, but how much disgrace you will suffer at the onset, how much degradation you will submit to as a preliminary? In these circumstances then are we to persevere in the war with a spirit and energy worthy of the British name and of the British character; or are we, by sending couriers to Paris, to prostrate ourselves at the feet of a stubborn and supercilious government, to do what they require, and to submit to whatever they may impose? I hope there is not a hand in his Majesty's counsels who would sign the proposals, that there is not a heart in this House in the breast of any man who would sanction the measure, and that there is not a person in the British dominions who would act as the courier.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer concluded with moving an address to his Majesty, which was an echo of the message.

Mr. *Eryskine* rose to oppose the motion. He said, that that when the honourable gentlemen first rose to move his address, he had hoped to have found it very different to what, on hearing it read, it turned out to be. He had hoped, that instead of the purport of it, which had been imparted to him, as having fallen from the honourable gentleman, while he had for some short time retired out of the House, "that it was an engagement to his Majesty to prosecute the war with vigour." He had hoped rather, he said, that it would have borne a resemblance to another member of the hon. gentleman's speech in an earlier stage of it, in which he said, "That he did not wish to pledge the House to any specific time or period to which the war ought to be protracted, or to any particular and specific terms which ought

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which ought to be insisted on by the Allies." The honourable gentleman, however, by this address, would precisely draw the House, if it should agree to adopt it, into that very situation to which he had said he would not wish to pledge it. So far as he understood the address, the House, if they voted it, would be pledged to support his Majesty in the prosecution of the war without end, or at least to carry it on till France was brought to a different disposition than that which she at present entertained. And if that was what they were about to pledge themselves to in the address now proposed, it was surely proper that the House of Commons should consider well the situation in which they stood before they ventured to sanction a measure of so much importance. The honourable gentleman with that dexterity which was peculiarly his own, with those great abilities and splendid eloquence from which he did not wish to detract, and with that consummate knowledge which he possessed of the temper of the House, had represented as if the House of Commons would be only pledged for a time to support the continuance of the war, whereas he sincerely believed there would be no limits to its duration till we are overtaken by calamities, to the pressure of which we shall be compelled to yield, and till we become the victims of a necessity which has no law. He would allow that the situation of the honourable gentleman was in some degree a critical one, and of course, that in the argument he made use of, he would naturally be led to say every thing he could, as much in favour of his own country, and against that of the opposite party, as circumstances would allow. He believed, that as an individual, he himself might, from that general attachment which a man bears to the country in which he was born, and afterwards educated, be induced to use every partial and favourable argument in which there was any dispute between the two, in support of his own country. But, standing then as a representative of the people, and speaking to a point in which not only his own happiness and interests, but the interests and happiness of the whole people of this kingdom were so deeply concerned; it became his duty to speak what he believed to be the stern truth, though that should in some degree militate against the justice of that country. The honourable gentleman had laid down two propositions, both of which he meant to controvert, and if he succeeded in shewing them to be false, he should destroy the force of all that had been adduced against the French Government. The first was, that France was

the aggressor in the war, and the second, that the prolongation of the contest was owing to the pride and obstinacy of the enemy. In combating the first of these propositions, he reminded the House of the time when the Ambassador of France (M. Chauvelin) was supplicating peace from this country, and when she disavowed all the grounds of the quarrel which they now endeavoured to fasten upon her. It was impossible, he said, to take up a negotiation at the end of the war, and to decide upon the justice and injustice of the pretensions of either party, without looking back to the various stages of the quarrel. On the 12th of December, 1792, the King met his Parliament. The French Ambassador was at that time still in the country. His Majesty's speech contained three distinct grounds of complaint: the first was, the French sending over seditious missionaries to this country; the second was, their meditating an invasion of Holland; and thirdly, their interference in opening the Scheldt. At that time all the correspondence between Lord Grenville and the French Ambassador was concealed from the House, though M. Chauvelin had given separate and satisfactory answers to all the complaints entertained by this Court. He entreated that the King would bring to condign punishment those who disseminated sedition in his dominions, announced the determination of France to keep within her own limits, and to respect the rights of other nations. Notwithstanding this plain and specific disavowal, however, of all the grounds of hostility, war was declared upon France. At that time Belgium was not in her possession. He asked then, whether France could be considered as the aggressor, who offered peace to this country on terms which the right honourable gentleman would be worshipped as a God if he could now procure?—[Mr. Erskine suddenly stopped, and after a pause sat down under evident symptoms of indisposition.]

Mr. Fox said, sorry indeed am I on account of my learned and honourable friend, whose indisposition has now compelled him to sit down; sorry for the sake of the House, whose information from the train of argument which he had adopted, has been thus unpleasantly interrupted; and sorry for the cause of peace and Great Britain, which ministers by their imprudent counsels, and infatuated policy, seem determined to push to the last verge of ruin, that I am obliged to address the House on the present occasion. I feel it, however, incumbent upon me to come forward in the present instance, knowing that my opinion on the subject entirely

tirely coincides with that of my honourable friend who has just sat down, but lamenting, that in consequence of his indisposition, the argument on this momentous question must considerably suffer from the want of that conviction and ability with which it would have been enforced by his superior powers. I need not state that the business is of the utmost importance, that the occasion is such, as though we may not think it necessary to contemplate with despondency and despair, we cannot survey but with the most serious considerations, and with feelings of the deepest regret. After a war of four years, which is stated to have been attended with many occurrences highly honourable and advantageous to the British arms, and to have been accompanied with no disgrace, after the immense expenditure incurred in the prosecution of hostilities, an expenditure, which undoubtedly has been greatly aggravated by the extravagance of those concerned in superintending the plan of operations, after an addition of a sum of no less than 200 millions to the national debt, and of 6 millions to the permanent taxes of the country, after an enormous effusion of human blood, after producing more private misery in the civilized globe than any conqueror or tyrant from the days of Alexander to the present: after an incalculable sum, so far are we from having gained any point or any object for which we set out in the war, so far are we from having achieved any advantage, that the Minister has this night come forward in a most elaborate speech, which lasted for a considerable space, (and when I say it lasted long, I do not mean to infer that it was not heard with pleasure) and after all this expenditure of blood and treasure, which has taken place in the contest, has endeavoured to prove, that the only effect has been, that the enemy have become more unreasonable than ever in their pretensions, and that all hopes of peace are removed to a still greater distance. You are now not allowed to hope for the restoration of peace, unless some change is wrought by the events of war. And at what period is this prospect brought forward? After a war of four years, which so far from having produced any favourable change on the dispositions of the enemy, if we may trust to the representations of the right honourable gentleman, has only served to encrease the insolence of their style, and the exorbitance of their pretensions. The same necessity is still stated to exist for the continuance of the war. It would nevertheless have been some consolation, if after the right hon. gentleman had stated at such length, and with such an elaborate

display of eloquence, the exorbitant pretensions of the enemy, he had suggested some means of reducing them. But, good God, how striking is the contrast! In this speech of three hours, I find only one solitary sentence, which is at all calculated to afford any hope of a satisfactory issue to the present unfortunate contest. And of what materials does the remainder of the speech consist? It is merely a revival of opinions by which we have found ourselves constantly deluded. We are left in the same hopeless state with respect to the attainment of the object of the contest. The right honourable gentleman says, that he had formerly given a representation of the deplorable situation of the French finances from uncertain documents, but that he is now enabled to confirm the same representation from the most indubitable authority; the statement of the Directory. I am apt to believe that the documents of the right honourable gentleman in both instances are equally authoritative. Formerly he proceeded on the speeches of leading members of the Convention, and on official reports. He now grounds his statement on a publication of the Directory. If his authority has failed him in former instances, what force can he now attach to conclusions drawn from similar premises. It has been found from experience, that in proportion as the finances of the French have been acknowledged, even by themselves, to be reduced to the lowest ebb, in the same proportion have their exertions been found to be wonderful and unparalleled. Now the right honourable gentleman builds his conclusion of the certain ruin of the French finances on an immediate statement from the Directory. I wonder that he does not go further, and quote the very ingenious letter of Lord Malmesbury, in which he reports the conversation that took place between him and M. Delacroix. By the bye, we shall probably soon have another account of this conversation, through the medium of the French Papers. In this conversation the French minister is represented as having paid the highest compliments to the extensive means possessed by this country, as having described it from its internal sources of wealth, and from its colonies in the Indies, to be mistress of almost boundless resources. Thus while the Directory admit that Great Britain is distinguished by her wealth, and full of resources, they have no hesitation to acknowledge their own poverty and embarrassments. They acknowledge to all Europe, that from the want of money the army is considerably in arrears, and every branch of the internal administration, under circumstances of the greatest embarrassment and

and distress. They at the same allow to this country all the advantages of an augmented commerce, and of increasing opulence and prosperity. In this House we have heard France represented as sometimes in the gulph, and sometimes at the verge of bankruptcy, and it is rather curious that at different periods we should have heard it alternatively described at one time, as in the very gulph, and at another as at the verge of bankruptcy. But while they admit the ruined state of their own finances, what a striking contrast do their exertions in the present contest, and the success which has followed from their operations, afford to the conduct and fate of those, who have been entrusted with the management of the war on the part of this country. Whilst we in every quarter, which it was deemed most important to defend, have, in concert with our allies, been losing town after town, city after city, province after province; and whilst we have been equally driven from the possessions which he conceived to be necessary to the security of our commerce, or to the balance of power, France, resourceless and dispirited, all the while avowing its own distressed situation with respect to finance, and talking in the most respectful terms of our wealth and resources, has been constantly adding to its acquisitions, and aggrandizing its empire. France appears in the present moment as the conqueror of the most extensive and important territories! Belgium is annexed to her empire, great part of Italy has yielded to the force of her arms, and Holland is now united to the fate of the republic by ties of the strictest alliance. If indeed these acquisitions were to be regained to the cause of Great Britain and her allies, and by a lofty tone of argument, if the tide of victory was to be turned by the dexterity of the debate, and the efficacy of our exertions bore any proportion to the insolence of our boasting, we need not yet be afraid to claim a decided superiority. We are not at all deficient on the score of confident assertion, or presumptuous menace. But it is by other means, by other criterions and by other trials, that this question is to be decided. Weak and inconsiderable as I am in this House, I did my utmost previous to the commencement of this unfortunate contest, to persuade the government to send an Ambassador to Paris, when undoubtedly he would not have met with the treatment which an Ambassador of Great Britain is now alledged to have experienced. But when they say that this Ambassador was dismissed in a way unexampled in the history of civilized nations, they surely must have forgot the manner in which

which M. Chauvelin was sent from this country. At a subsequent period, when the whole of Belgium was regained, when the French were not possessed of one foot of ground in that territory, did I then neglect my duty to the country? No! I then renewed my motion for peace. This was at the period before the powers combined against France had gained the fortrefs of Valenciennes, but when it was certain that it must fall, I contended then was the period to make peace. And I now ask, if an attempt had been then made to negotiate, whether we might not have expected to obtain peace on terms equally honourable and advantageous, as any which we can now possibly claim? Should we have obtained a peace less favourable to the general balance of power, or less likely to be permanent in its duration than any which could be concluded under the circumstances of the present moment? Again, and again, have I pressed upon the House the necessity and policy of adopting measures for the restoration of peace, and again and again have my motions for that purpose been rejected. In order to shew how greatly Ministers miscalculated the nature of the contest, at that former period when I argued for peace, it was said, "what, make peace before you have achieved a single conquest, and when you are just beginning to make advances in the country of the enemy." Such, at that time, was the style of reasoning brought forward in opposition to the arguments which I urged in favour of peace. So widely were Ministers then deceived with respect to the nature of the contest, so falsely did they calculate as to the turn of subsequent events. Unhappy calculation! Unhappy mistake! The object did not respect a particular branch of trade, or a limited extent of territory. The most important interests of the country were at stake. The ministers by their calculations, were not pledging Jamaica, or any island of the West Indies; they were pledging Great Britain itself, and the fate of which may in some degree be considered as dependant on the issue of this night's debate. The right honourable gentleman formerly in talking of the nature of the contest, made use of a memorable expression, and which cannot easily be forgotten. He intimated that the nature of the contest was such, that our exertions ought to know no bounds, except so far as they were limited by our resources, and that our efforts must be extended to the utmost pitch, before we could either hope for an honourable termination of the struggle; or the secure and permanent enjoyment of peace. He expressly declared that

that we ought not to cease from the contest, till we should be able to say,

Possit quæ plurima virtus

Esse fuit. Toto certatum est corpore regni.

He addressed the quotation not to the House alone, not the country only, but to all Europe. If therefore, he asserted that he never would make peace till the resources of the country were in that situation described in the quotation,

Toto certatum est corpore regni.

he ought not to be surprised at the treatment he has met with.

The right honourable gentleman has stated the difficulties attendant upon the negotiation, as arising from two circumstances; first, the difficulty in all cases of proposing overtures, without being able to ascertain what reception they are likely to experience; secondly, the particular obstacles from the relative situation of the two countries. The honourable gentleman has, however, omitted to state a difficulty more weighty and insuperable than either of those I have now mentioned. In every negotiation the difficulty of coming to any definitive arrangement, must be infinitely increased in proportion to the degree of distrust, entertained by the parties, with respect to their mutual intentions. If the right honourable gentleman had some reason to suspect the sincerity of the French Directory, had not they at least equal grounds to entertain the same doubts with respect to his views in the negotiation? After every epithet of reproach had been exhausted by ministers to vilify their characters, was it to be expected that they would readily listen to terms of peace dictated by those ministers, except they were brought into that state of necessity and submission, which precluded them from any alternative, and compelled them to an unconditional compliance with any pacific proposition that might be presented to their acceptance? When Lord Malmesbury, in addressing the French minister, so often brings forwards his profession of high consideration, I cannot but smile, when I recollect that Lord Auckland was made a peer, (for I know of no other reason for his advancement to that dignity), merely because he declared that the men who are now addressed in such respectful terms "ought to be put under the sword of the law" and because he denounced them as miscreants and traitors to all Europe. His Lordship, by this declaration, brought forward in a publick capacity,

capacity, shewed that he, acting on the part of Great Britain, was not slow to be their executioner and their judge. There is one part of the address, which the right honourable gentleman has entirely omitted to notice, and to which I can by no means subscribe, that his Majesty has neglected no proper opportunity to conclude this war. [Mr. Fox desired the paragraph in the address to be read by the clerk. It was read accordingly.] A few years ago, when I earnestly pressed the propriety of the negotiation, the right honourable gentleman contended, that the French were not capable of maintaining the relations of peace and amity. He neither, however, at that time, nor at any subsequent period, shewed any reason why they were not capable of maintaining those relations. I ask, in what respect they are now become more capable of maintaining those relations, than when I formerly proposed to treat? Will the right honourable gentleman say, that then there was only a provisional government, and that there now exists a permanent constitution? I am sure that he will not venture to press that argument, as he must be aware of the extent to which it will lead him. And if such be the case, I have no hesitation to state, that the assertion in the address, that no proper opportunity has been omitted to conclude peace, is entirely false, and as such, must meet my decided negative. At last however, the right hon. gentleman declares, that he felt it his duty to attempt negotiation. I did not think it my duty to come forward to animadvert either on the motives of his conduct, or on the probable result of the measure, till the event had spoken for itself. The result has proved to be such, as however anxiously we might be disposed to deprecate it, it was not difficult to foresee from the commencement of the negotiation, still less from the mode in which it has been conducted. If the country, indeed consider the administration of the right honourable gentleman to be a blessing, they must take their choice between the continuance of that blessing and the restoration of peace. It is evident that those individuals who have conducted the war with such notorious incapacity, and entailed so many mischiefs on the country, must of all others be the most unfit to repair the errors of their own policy, and secure to Great Britain the enjoyment of permanent tranquillity. But not only have they evinced this glaring incapacity in the management of the present war, their conduct in former negotiations with respect to Spain and Russia has been such, as on the

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One hand to excite considerable distrust, and on the other to excite a well-grounded hope of bringing them down from the most lofty pretensions to the most humiliating concessions. But what can be thought of their sincerity in the present instance, when they have repeatedly declared that any peace, under the particular circumstances, could only afford a breathing space from hostility, and ultimately must tend to redouble all the mischiefs to be dreaded from a continuance of the war? But even if ministers had conducted the war with ability as distinguished, as their incapacity has been notorious, if they had displayed in debate as much temper and prudence, as they have discovered impolitic and indecent violence, if they had shewn themselves as much friends to the French, as on every occasion they have endeavoured to prove themselves the reverse; still I should have no hopes of peace on any permanent basis, except the present system of policy was entirely changed, and the principles upon which the war was undertaken totally disavowed. If the administration was to be transferred into the hands of persons, whose abilities I admire, and whose integrity I respect, as much as I condemn and reprobate the talents and character of those who are now placed at the helm of affairs, still I should consider this change of system and disavowal of principles, to be a necessary preliminary to peace. (*A laugh from the Treasury Bench*). I see the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) smile at the idea of power being transferred into other hands. No expression of ridicule from that quarter can personally affect me; but it will be long before the county smile in consequence of any triumph which that right hon. gentleman may enjoy in this House. I again say that it is necessary that the principles upon which the war was undertaken should be expressly disavowed. It is necessary for the solidity and permanence of any peace that may be concluded, that the maxims of sound sense, and of impartial equity, be recognized in the outset of the negotiation. The present has been a war of passion and of prejudice, and not of policy and self-defence. The right hon. gentleman, whatever may have been his sincerity in the transaction, is no stranger to the advantages that may be derived from the idea of a pending negotiation. That he now feels those advantages nobody will dispute. I know that some weeks ago a very confident report was circulated with respect to the probability of peace. It would be cu-

rious to know how far Lord Malmesbury at that period was influenced by any such belief. It does not appear from the papers, that at the moment he could reasonably hope for a successful issue to his negotiation. It seems dubious indeed, from the inspection of those papers, whether Lord Malmesbury was not sent over merely to display his diplomatic dexterity; to fence and parry with M. De la Croix, in order to shew his superior skill and adroitness in the management of argument, and the arts of political finesse; to confound the shallow capacity, and superficial reasoning of the French minister, and to make the cause of this country appear to be the better cause. While Lord Malmesbury was employed thus honourably in the display of his talents at Paris, the minister had an useful object of policy to answer at home. It was felt convenient for the purpose of financial arrangements to hold out the hope of peace, till such time as it was found that the appearance of negotiation might be renounced without any unfavourable effect, as to the supplies of the year. But in order more completely to ascertain the sincerity which has been shewn by ministers in the desire which they have expressed for peace, and the fairness of the means which they have employed for the attainment of that object, it may be necessary to enter a little more minutely into the history of that negotiation, and to follow the right honourable gentleman through the long detail which he brought forward on the subject, and which was sufficiently laboured to prove, that he was aware of all the difficulties with which he had to contend in vindicating the character of the British government, and of the necessity to put the most favourable gloss upon their conduct. The first step taken for the purpose of negotiation was, the communication at Basle, in which Mr. Wickham had been engaged as the agent of the British government. As he was not authorized to take any definitive step, or to make any declaration binding on the government, but little stress could be laid on that circumstance. Those, however, who attended to the details of that transaction, would not be disposed, even in that early stage of the business, to draw any inference very favourable to the sincerity of ministers. The mission of Lord Malmesbury is unquestionably what ministers wish to be considered as the grand effort for peace, and as affording an unequivocal proof of the sincerity of their wishes for its attainment. Of the details of that negotiation we are enabled to judge from the papers which have been laid upon the table of the House. Till the publication of his Majesty's manifesto on the subject,

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I was only acquainted with the circumstances of that transaction from the statement of the public prints. I was not a little surprised when the manifesto reached me in the country, and, from the perusal of its contents, was induced to suspect that I must have been completely misled in my previous information. On the inspection, however, of the papers laid on your table, I was still more surprised when I found that the public prints were much more accurate in their representation of facts than his Majesty's declaration. Never, indeed, was any paper brought forward with the stamp of official authority so little connected with the documents upon which it is professed to be founded; so little warranted in the conclusions drawn from its premises. It entirely conceals the most important facts of the negotiation, and states the others so loosely as not to exhibit them in any precise and distinct shape. The right honourable gentleman has stated that a degree of disrespect was in the first instance shewn to a foreign court by the French Directory, in their refusal to grant a passport for a British ambassador, upon the application of the minister from the court of Denmark. But how does this fact stand? The court of Denmark did not at all interfere in the business. The Danish minister, in the letter in which he applied for a passport, expressly stated, that he acted merely in a private capacity, and not in consequence of any instructions which he had received from his court. So much then for the alleged disrespect shewn by the French to a foreign court, and the inference which is thence drawn of a disposition thus manifested to throw contempt on all established usages, and to dispense with the ordinary forms of accommodation, and the understood civilities of political intercourse. I understand, that as an apology for bringing forward the manifesto previous to the publication of the papers, much has been said of the mechanical labour of preparing those papers for the inspection of the House. I have formerly been in office, and I believe that those who are now engaged in the service of the department are fully as capable and diligent as the persons by whom I was then assisted. And I confidently declare that I see nothing in the mechanical labour of those papers, that, if they had arrived on Saturday morning, ought to have prevented them from being in a state of readiness to be produced on Saturday evening. But I rather suspect that with regard to the publication of the manifesto, it was thought expedient to attempt to give a bias to the sentiments of the House, before it was deemed adviseable to submit the facts contained in

the papers to their cool and sober investigation. As to the delay which has been imputed on the score of mechanical labour, I am rather disposed to believe that it was purposely interposed, in order to afford to ministers an opportunity of revising the papers, and of deciding what part of their contents it might be prudent to suppress, and what might be safely submitted to the publick eye. It is curious to attend to the nature of the powers with which Lord Malmesbury was furnished, and to their connection with the object of his mission. He was sent in order to negotiate for peace, and furnished with full powers to conclude; but though he was thus authorised to conclude, he was allowed no latitude to treat. He had no instructions with respect to the terms he should propose, and no discretion upon which to act with respect to the propositions he might receive. When he was asked, if he came to treat for the King of Great Britain separately? he said, No: but that he came to treat jointly for the King of Great Britain and his allies. When he was asked, If he was furnished with any powers from those allies? He again replied, No. When he was asked, What terms he had to propose? he said he would send for instructions. Thus it appeared, that he was impowered to conclude for the King of Great Britain, but not qualified to treat, and that for the allies for whom he came to treat, he had no power to conclude. Could there possibly be a more ridiculous farce—a more palpable mockery of the forms of negotiation! We next come to the basis, and this indeed carries us but a little way in the progress of negotiation. In this instance, the basis was laid so wide, as to comprehend no distinct object, and to be reduceable to no precise meaning. It was that sort of general principle which no one could possibly dispute, but which could at the same time be attended with no practical benefit. The French accordingly stated that they had agreed to your principle, and that they only disputed its application. The right honourable gentleman has asserted that a basis is always desirable; but, then it ought to be a basis which meant something, and not, as in the present instance, which meant nothing. The principle of mutual compensations is substantially recognised in every negotiation, and did not at all require to be specified. The general objects of dispute in fixing a basis of negotiation had been, Whether it should be regulated by the *status quo ante bellum*, or the *uti possidetis*? The right honourable gentleman stated as a proof of reluctance to negotiate on the part of the French, that they for some time hesitated to admit

admit our proposed basis ; but, in fact, they virtually recognized the principle when they entered into the discussion of terms. He who asks, What you will give ? or states what he is willing to receive, as once admits the basis of mutual compensation. But as a proof of the consistency of ministers, a fortnight afterwards, when the French formally recognized the principle, and asked Lord Malmesbury, what terms he was prepared to propose ? he was unprovided with any answer, and obliged to send to this country for instructions. What inference is to be drawn from this conduct the part of ministers ? Is it not most probable that by thus bringing forward a futile, illusory and unmeaning basis, they expected to disgust the French in the first instance, and at once to get rid of the negotiation ; and if the French, who must have felt themselves mocked at this treatment, and who must have been more and more assured of the insincerity of our ministers, had thought proper to stop all further proceedings, would they not have been fully justified ? By what motive were they bound to countenance a transaction which was conducted with no good faith, and could promise no satisfactory issue ? Undoubtedly ministers expected that the French would have resented the insult, and have broken off the negotiation in its outset. They thus hoped to obtain an easy credit for their pacific intentions, and to throw upon the enemy the odium of a determined purpose of hostility, and an unreasonable rejection of the preliminary basis of negotiation. Unfortunately, however, for this project, the basis was recognized. The disappointment of ministers was evident. Lord Malmesbury was unprepared how to act, and obliged to send for further instructions.

The question with ministers then became, since they have so ungraciously and unexpectedly accepted the basis which we intended to be rejected, what can we find that they must be indispensibly called upon to refuse ? What terms of insult and humiliation can we find that may rouse their dormant pride, and inevitably provoke rejection ? Lord Malmesbury who before had no terms to propose, was now instructed to bring forward terms for the purpose of being rejected ; and care was taken that they should be of such a nature as could not be expected to undergo much discussion, or readily to fail of their purpose.

I come now, Sir, to consider what was said by the right honourable gentleman with respect to the particular terms. In commencing this part of his speech, he thought some apology was necessary for the sort of terms which had been proposed

proposed by Lord Malmesbury on the part of this country. He stated that it was always usual to be somewhat high in our demands in the first instance; that any propositions at the commencement of a negotiation were never considered as decisive; and that, in the progress of treating, we might relax from our original demands as circumstances should render expedient. But was the right honourable gentleman so unfit for the situation which he held, so ill qualified to judge of the conduct which was proper for those times, as seriously to maintain this argument? Did he not recollect, that, from what he had himself stated, negotiation itself might be considered as made upon a hostile principle? He had described it as a negotiation, the unsuccessful result of which must tend to divide France and to unite Great Britain, which must give indubitable confirmation to the justice of our cause and add double energy to our future efforts. In this situation, and with this particular view, what wise man would have looked to the last precedent of negotiation in order to regulate his conduct, and have conceived it necessary to proceed with all the tediousness of forms and dexterity of diplomatic artifice which might have been employed in any former instance. Instead of carrying our pretensions higher than you might be disposed to accept, you should have gone to the other extreme; you should have stated them at the lowest point of what you deemed to be fair and equitable, and, if any thing, rather have been below the mark of what you might fairly claim, than exorbitant and unreasonable in your demands. You would thus have secured the end which the minister professed to have in view, to render apparent to all Europe the equity and moderation of your own sentiments, and the injustice and ambition of the enemy. Had the French, from a suspicion of your sincerity, been inclined to break off the negotiation in the first stage, they might have said, "as no basis has been agreed upon, we see that the negotiation can come to no good, and therefore we will stop all further proceedings." But when they acceded to your basis, and invited you to propose particular terms, it then became you to be doubly careful by the fairness and moderation with which you acted, to demonstrate the equity of your character, and vindicate your own sincerity in the eyes of Europe. I shall now advert to the two confidential memorials. I confess that I was never more strongly struck with the impossibility, even for talents the most splendid, and eloquence the most powerful, to cover the weakness of a cause, and supply the deficiency of real argument, than in

in the instance of what the right honourable gentleman said with respect to Holland. Even if Holland should be restored to its pristine situation, if the Statholder should be reinstated in the government, and the alliance renewed with this country, he does not go the length of saying, that even then he would restore to Holland all her former possessions. No—he might then perhaps only be disposed to relax in their favour a considerable part of the conditions on which the present state of things obliges him to insist. A right honourable gentleman (Mr. Dundas) some time since made a very imprudent declaration in this House, that as we had taken the Cape of Good Hope, and Ceylon, we meant to keep it for ever. We feel ourselves, it seems, too nearly interested in those acquisitions to be disposed to relinquish them. This is reasoning very much *a la Francaise*. We say that it is better even for the Dutch themselves, that Ceylon and the Cape of Good Hope should be in our hands than in theirs. The French may, with equal justice, alledge the same pretence for their refusal to part with Belgium. They may say that it is better for the interests of Belgium that it should remain in their hands, than that it should be restored to Austria. But if Holland be not, in every respect, reinstated in her former situation, then, says the right honourable gentleman, we have nothing to propose. It is curious to remark, at the very moment that he is at such pains to represent the demands of the French as in the highest degree exorbitant and unjust, how much he countenances those demands by the style of his own pretensions. He says, “We have taken a great deal from Holland, they have taken nothing from us, therefore we are not bound in justice and equity to make them any restitution; but if Maestricht, or some place be ceded to the Emperor for the security of the Austrian Netherlands, we may perhaps be induced to make them some restitution, but on no account can we consent that Ceylon or the Cape of Good Hope shall be restored.” On the same grounds might the French say, “We have taken a great deal from the Emperor, he has taken nothing from us, we therefore are not bound in justice and equity to make him any restitution: We demand that the *uti possidetis* be the basis of the negociation.” What are the specific proposals, which you make to the French? You propose to them to give up all their conquests to the Emperor, and to evacuate Italy. The right honourable gentleman has said, that it is a strained geographical supposition, that by this demand with respect to Italy, it should be understood that they are also
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required to evacuate Savoy and Nice. I know not upon what geographical authority he proceeds, when he affirms that this would be a strained supposition; I always thought that these places had been in no other country but Italy; perhaps I may have been mistaken. Will you propose to the French to evacuate Italy, to give up the Milanese, Belgium and Luxemburgh, you demand of them to negotiate the arrangement of peace with Germany, with his Imperial Majesty as constitutional head of the empire. And though the French are already at peace with the most considerable Germanic powers, with the King of Prussia, with the Electors of Saxony, Hanover, &c. you thus would place them in a situation in which they would have to begin all these treaties anew. You hint indeed, that in consequence of this arrangement, which supposes on their part so great a sacrifice, that it is not impossible that some cession may be made to them on the Germanic side of their frontiers. And in return for all the sacrifices you require from the French, you offer to restore to them Martinique, St. Lucia, Tobago, reserving, however, one of them as an equivalent, if they are to retain St. Domingo. The restoration of Belgium is stated as a *sine qua non*; it has been represented to be of the utmost importance, that it should not be suffered to remain in the hands of the French. I should indeed regret to see Belgium attached to the territories of the republic; but if you are really sincere in your wishes for peace, if you consider Belgium as an object of so much value, do not offer brags for gold. Let us put the case, that Belgium was still in the hands of the Emperor, how would you treat the offer of two or three West India Islands, on the part of the French, in order that it might be given up to them? If you really wished France to give up Belgium, you should have offered to give up the Cape of Good Hope, which a determination has been so indiscreetly expressed to retain. I have no hesitation in saying, that it ought only to be considered as an instrument to procure the restoration of peace on favourable terms, and that if you could get a proper equivalent that you ought not to keep it; what you now offer is trifling indeed, and if France should comply with your demands, what would be her relative situation with respect to the other powers of Europe? She would in that case have given up Belgium, Luxemburgh and Italy, and further it is required, that something should be ceded to the Emperor, in order, as is stated, to render him secure on the side of the Austrian Netherlands.

Netherlands. The three great powers of Europe will all of them be left with considerable acquisitions. The King of Prussia has gained a third part of Poland. Russia has obtained a considerable extent of territory from that unfortunate country: and in addition to his share in the division, it is also proposed that the Emperor of Germany shall be put in possession of Maestricht, or of some other place? France is only to be left with Savoy, Nice and Avignon. Is the state of the war such as to justify this proposition? Is it fair and equitable that all the other powers should gain more than France? When Great Britain made a proposition so unreasonable, France naturally took a step calculated to give confidence to the people in those countries she had annexed to the Republick, by declaring that on no account could she consent to give them up. In the ingenious conference which took place between the British Ambassador and the French Minister, Lord Malmesbury declared that the King of Great Britain would not recede from his demand with respect to the Netherlands. Must not the French, in consequence of this declaration, have been induced to assume an equally resolute tone with respect to their intention of keeping that territory, when, from the nature of the terms proposed, they perceived no likelihood that peace could be had? As to the French Minister having asked Lord Malmesbury to give in his *ultimatum*, it evidently meant no more than that he should sign a formal declaration of what he had said with respect to Belgium, a demand which surely cannot be considered unreasonable. After having heard to day so much stated of the value of Belgium, and such importance attached to the demand that it should be restored to the Emperor, I cannot but recollect that it is not very long since, that the people of that country were in a state of rebellion, and that it was surmised at that time, that we were by no means averse to support them in their endeavours to shake off the Austrian yoke. But however great the value of Belgium may be, is it an object of such immense consequence, as to justify the continuance of a long, a hazardous, and destructive war? Is it worth being contended for at the expence of such blood and treasure? And even if the object be deemed so valuable as to justify all those sacrifices, there is another question to be considered. If in addition to that expence and carnage with which the war has already been attended, it be proper to sacrifice a hundred millions more, and a hundred thousand men for its attainment, it ought also to be shewn that it is attainable by those means. After what has appeared from the experience of the

past who will pretend to say that a continuance of war and all its calamities will tend ultimately to bring you nearer to your object. It ought besides to be recollected that the Emperor, who is your friend to day, may be your enemy to-morrow. I remember that it is not eight months since the Emperor was not so much a favourite with ministers; perhaps, indeed, they were cautious in expressing their partiality, lest it should be suspected that money was then going to the Court of Vienna. At that time the King of Sardinia was extolled as a pattern of fidelity to all Princes; the Emperor seemed to make no figure in the comparison; I do not mean to impute to the Sardinian Monarch any breach of faith; circumstances of necessity compelled him to conclude a treaty with the French Republick, and we have not heard in what situation he is now to be considered with respect to this country. Ministers have already sent large sums to his Imperial Majesty; we are about to make still further advances, and it cannot be calculated that the alliance can be maintained at an expence to the country of less than a sum of two millions annually. I mean no reflection on the character of the Emperor, but if we should not be able to grant him the same assistance, he may be reduced to the same necessity as the King of Sardinia, and compelled to conclude a peace. When all these circumstances are considered, the sacrifices which must necessarily be incurred in the attempt to wrest Belgium from the French, and the uncertainty of obtaining the object, the minister, who on that ground only refused to make peace, has much to answer for on the score both of policy and humanity. Here comes the question of the treaty concluded with the Emperor in 1793, by which we engaged not to lay down our arms without his consent. I greatly lamented the conclusion of any such treaty at the time, and then brought forward a motion, that it was the duty of the House not to approve of any engagements that might tend to create obstacles in the way of peace. If we urge the stipulations of a treaty, as a reason why we cannot conclude peace but on certain terms, we directly sanction the sort of argument which is represented as so unjustifiable on the part of the French. I certainly am no friend to setting up the constitution of France against the *Droit Publique* of Europe. But are the French in their arrangements to consider the engagements of our treaties, as of greater weight and consequence than we affect to consider theirs. The right honourable gentleman has put the case, that supposing the French Constitution decreed that the city of Westminster

ter formed an integral part of the Republic, were we bound to respect such a determination? The case may be retorted, that if we by our treaty with the Emperor had stipulated to put him in possession of Paris, with what colour could so ridiculous a stipulation be urged as an obstacle to peace? We had no more right to talk of our treaties, than they of the regulations laid down with respect to their boundaries. If an absurd or impracticable condition is introduced into a treaty, is there not reason to suspect, that it has been foisted in merely for the purpose of throwing difficulties in the way of peace. The right honourable gentleman has gone at great length into the subject of the French Constitution. He laid great stress on a remark of M. Delacroix, that it would be impossible to revoke the regulations of the constitution with respect to the boundaries of the Republic without convening the Primary Assemblies. This, which he treated as an exaggeration of the proposition of the French minister, that it was impossible to give up any part of the territory annexed to the Republic, I, on the contrary consider in the light of of an explanation, and as doing away all the offensive part of the principle. For instance, if the Elector of Hesse Darmstadt, applied to me as a minister of this country, to conclude with him a subsidiary treaty, if I thought the measure advisable, I would have signified my readiness to acquiesce in his application; but at the same time I would have told him, that I must first consult the House of Commons, and that without their approbation the constitution declared that it was impossible to dispose of any part of the public money. The same conduct I should have pursued towards the Emperor, in making advances to whom ministers during the present session, have thought themselves entitled to dispense with the most valuable privilege of the House of Commons. And when in this instance I cited the constitution of this country, it could not be considered as a direct negative on the application; but only as throwing a difficulty in the way of the measure. We are not bound to respect the French constitution; but they undoubtedly, in the course of negotiation may fairly urge any ground of difficulty, which its regulations present to a compliance with our demands. The right honourable gentleman has imputed to the French, all the odium and blame of breaking off the negotiation. He says that we are not bound by any thing as a *sine qua non*, for that, in the nature of a negotiation, is impossible until it is concluded. That is easily stated in the course of a debate. But whatever the right

honourable gentleman may say upon that subject, the world at large, in judging dispassionately upon it will regard the memorial of Lord Malmesbury as the *sine qua non* of the Court of Great Britain respecting Belgium. You say it may be recovered by force of arms. Good God! what is the probability of that event? What are we to do? What can we do? What security have we that we shall not sink in our prospects upon that event, and that they will not rise in proportion as we sink? Remember the time when Belgium was in possession of the Allies, and it was proposed that we should enter upon a negotiation for peace then, and at which time the French would have gladly attended to terms of peace of which they will not now hear. What in the prosecution of this unhappy contest are you to look for the further you proceed, but terms still worse than those which you might obtain even now, if you gave proof of sincerity in negotiation? Consider what your disgrace will be if you fail to recover Belgium, which you have told the world is a *sine qua non*. Have you considered the difficulties that may attend it. Are you prepared to defray the expence of acting up to your determination? Are you prepared for all the hazards that may attend it? If you are, say so at once boldly, and act like men; but do not amuse the people of this country by a delusive pretence, as you did by an amendment, which you adopted, to get rid of a motion of an honourable friend of mine, and in which you stated to Europe, that you would negotiate with France when its government was capable of maintaining the relation of peace and amity with other powers. I know that these little tricks and artifices have had their ends. They have often, much too often, been employed, and in some situations they may almost appear harmless; but these little quibbling distinctions are not adapted to the important affairs of which we are now to consider. The minister, in ordinary cases, shall be welcome on my part to his little triumph in such little artifices: but these are not times to indulge him in them. He is not made for these times of great difficulty. When the fate of a question, comparatively indifferent, is before us, his talents are well adapted to obtain success, which, for my own part, I do not envy him; but when the fate of Empires depends upon our proceedings, we should not give way to his vanity. These great subjects are too much for his talents, and when he exerts his art, it appears, in such cases, contemptible. The question here is not, who shall enjoy the tri-

triumph of a little quibble in a debate? But whether you are to have peace or war? And whether you are, or are not, to wrest Belgium by force from the French Republick? Whether the people of England are or are not to grant to the Emperor two millions a year for that specific object? Say you are determined to carry on the war upon such terms. If you do, I am sure you will not have the consent of the people of England to your project. I know what use will be made of the words of this address in the newspapers that are devoted to the service of the minister, if this House should be so indiscreet as to agree to it. I know it will be said that this House has not pledged itself to any specific points as to any future negotiation. I know the address is worded with that view, and to enable members to say to their constituents, we have given no pledge to prosecute this war further than to compel the French to listen to fair and honourable terms of peace. I know that many members of this House have been from time to time themselves imposed upon by this species of artifice. But the real substance of such tricking cannot long delude the people of this country. These are not times to continue such artifices. This House has not credit enough; this House does not deserve credit enough---

Mr. *Forke* called to order. He said he thought the right honourable gentleman had gone far enough in many things that he had stated, but this was going too far, and he desired that the words might be taken down; asking at the same time whether they were not disorderly; and whether their author did not deserve the censure of the House?

Mr. *Fox* said, these, Sir, I repeat are not times in which this House should try to deceive the people of this country, by nice, verbal criticism, and minute distinctions about the substantial acts which they are going through. I say, that parliament has not credit enough with this country, and does not deserve credit enough with the country, to deceive them upon nice and verbal distinctions. I was going to finish the sentence, and to shew, (what indeed is obvious without illustration, for no parliament ought to have credit enough to deceive the public,) that by agreeing to this address, you would shew that you are desirous of prosecuting the war to obtain Belgium by force, while you affect to say, your object is to obtain peace on safe and honourable terms.

Mr.

Mr. *Yorke* said, that the words as he understood them, were, that parliament had not credit with the country, and did not deserve that credit—

The *Speaker* said, that the rule of the House was, when any gentleman desired the words of another member to be taken down, it was necessary he should put them down in writing, in order that they might appear in the shape of a motion.

Mr. *Yorke* said, that if the House could sit still to hear these words, which were re-asserted, and not censure the author, he should not think it of much consequence afterwards whether the orders of the House were observed or not. [An instantaneous cry of *Chair! Chair! Chair!*]

Mr. *Yorke* said, that the words were, that the House had not credit with the country, and did not deserve credit of the country.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, that when the honourable member called to order he expected to hear nothing that was out of order, but it appeared to him that the most disorderly sentence that had been uttered that night, came from the gentleman who called to order.

The *Speaker* stated to the House his opinion on the point. If one member only moves for the words of any other member to be taken down, it cannot be done. But if it should be the opinion of a majority of the House that the words ought to be taken down, then it became the duty of that member, who first desired the words to be taken down, to state them himself, as he understood them, in writing, in order that they might be fairly submitted to the House in the form of a motion. The member, who spoke the words, had a right to peruse them when thus put into writing, and to state what he apprehended he had actually said, if he differed from those put down. He had also a right to give his explanation to the House: and if there was a difference in the opinions of members respecting the words spoken and those put down in writing, it then became a question for the House to determine. The honourable member who spoke the words, had given an explanation which was very different from those mentioned by the honourable member who called him to order; that honourable gentleman, had interrupted the honourable member who spoke the words, before he had finished the sentence. In regard to the point of order, if it had appeared to him that the honourable member who spoke the words was out of order, he should certainly have taken notice of it.

Mr.

Mr. Serjeant *Adair* said, that the words objected to were faithfully quoted, with the exception of one word, which altered the sense of the sentence altogether, which the right honourable gentleman had just uttered when he was called to order. To interrupt a gentleman in the middle of a sentence, was not the way to arrive at his meaning.

Mr. *Yorke* said, that from what had fallen from the learned serjeant as to the omission of a word which he had not heard, he would not trouble the House any further, as he saw that different opinions prevailed as to the words spoken.

Mr. *W. Smith* said, that while the support, good order, and wholesome regulations of the House were pretended to be the object, it was necessary that a gentleman should not be interrupted without a sufficient cause. He therefore hoped the honourable gentleman would be obliged to proceed with his motion, that the words might be taken down and the opinion of the House had upon them. For his part, he had attended to what the honourable gentleman had said on the subject, and he thought his words had been infinitely more offensive and disrespectful to the House, than any which had been uttered by his honourable friend. [Mr. Fox was much called upon to proceed.]

Mr. *Fox* proceeded.—I was going to state the circumstances of the country and of the time in which we live. I was going to state to the House, and if my words are to be still objected to, I hope they will be taken down, for I do not mean to shelter myself under any idea of having uttered words in haste. I mean to say, that this House has not credit enough with this country. That it does not deserve credit enough, to come of its own authority to this address, and afterwards to support the King's ministers, (I am referring to what has happened in the last parliament, and what has recently happened in this) under the idea of any verbal criticisms that may do away the spirit of a measure. I am obliged to my learned friend for the part he has taken upon the question of order in this debate. But I say again, from what has happened in the last House of Commons, and what has recently happened in this, this House neither has, nor ought to have, credit with the public for all its professions. I wish my words to be taken down. I know the words are not so respectful as I could wish. But to return to what has been my idea, that this House cannot get rid of the responsibility which will attach to it by the proceedings this day, if they agree to the address which is now proposed to them. Well do I remember what two years ago was said to persuade

persuade and cajole the members of this House, to agree to an amendment to a motion of an honourable friend of mine, to negociate with the French Republick. After a long notice of an honourable friend of mine to bring his motion forward, and after he had, with the greatest candour, stated even the very words of his motion when he gave notice of his intention to make it. The motion was worded to call for an issue upon it; an affirmative or a direct negative. A promise was made on the part of the minister to meet it so. I well remember how that question was afterwards met. The minister dared not to try the effect of a direct negative; but he persuaded the House to adopt a tiffue of words which he moved as an amendment to that motion. This he did merely as a salvo for the consciences of some members of this House, who in their hearts wished for a negociation, but who wished also not to vote against the minister. The gentlemen who thus voted for the amendment really thought, and felt in their hearts, that they were paving the way for a negociation, and thus they were deceived; for the only use that was made of the vote upon that amendment was, to carry on the war without any attempt at negociation. The minister may say he did not think that any members of that House were in that situation; but I know they were, and this is the usual artifice. Motions or amendments are made, which may afterwards bear what construction the minister pleases to put upon them; and it is thus he proceeds in the way which best suits his inclination. This was precisely the case with regard to the motion to which I have alluded. Why do I mention this? To shew what the effect is of these jesuitical practices, by which the minister cajoles the majority of this House; in consequence of which upwards of one hundred millions have been added to the capital of your debt, and the lives of half a million of our fellow-beings have been sacrificed. It is dreadful to reflect on the mighty mischief which is the effect of apparently so contemptible a cause; for it is all owing to a little quibbling upon words. If this little artifice, the offspring of a mean spirit, were to produce but the triumph of a debate; if it proved only that the minister has a great keenness in repartee; if it argued only his acuteness, and there was to be an end of it, he should be welcome to his paltry triumph from his paltry artifice. I, for my own part, should have nothing to say against it. I should smile at the effect, while I despised the cause. But when I know that the fate of millions of mankind depend upon it; when we all feel the dreadful havock it has made

in

in the happiness of our species, it is not easy for the most philosophical temper to preserve its serenity: we are naturally led to indignation upon such reflections. It is this which makes men doubt whether that constitution can be good under which so many evils are produced. I say, that these evils will be increased, if this House agrees to the address which is now before it; and this country may soon be in a situation out of which it can never recover. If the House should agree with me, that Belgium ought not to be a *sine qua non* in our view of peace, they will act like men in saying so, freely, in which case they will, of course reject this address:

There are some important parts of this subject, on which neither the communication from his Majesty, nor the minister's speech, conveyed to us any information. Was the Emperor, or was he not, a party, to this late negotiation? If the French had acceded to the proposals of Lord Malmesbury in his demands for the Emperor, to their full extent, his Imperial Majesty would have acceded to the terms of course, because he was to have the whole of what belonged to him before the war; but if, in the event of our negotiation with the French, we should agree, that the Emperor was to lose a single town, is the minister prepared to say that he has any authority from his Imperial Majesty to declare that he would have acceded? I ask again, was the Emperor a party to this negotiation? Had Lord Malmesbury any authority whatever from the Emperor to proceed upon this negotiation? If he had not, there must be an end at once of all pretence for sincerity on our part, for it is stated that the negotiation was to be carried on, and concluded on behalf of his Britannic Majesty and his Allies. Perhaps ministers may say, they do not know whether the Emperor would have acceded to any terms in the negotiation short of the entire restoration of all he has lost in the present war. What! had they no means of knowing the sentiments of his Imperial Majesty upon the subject? Were they taken by surprise? When they sent him money from time to time, they had a pretty good opportunity of asking his opinion. Nothing of this kind appears to have been done. Why then, I ask,—whether this negotiation was not, on our part, what the minister has stated it to be on the part of the French, “a mockery of a negotiation?” It is asked by the ministers, and that with an air of triumph, why did not the French offer a *contre-projet*; it was perfectly unnecessary, after our *ultimatum*. But there is a point in this matter on

which the minister and I agree. He says that the whole of this negotiation is different from any other; and he says that nothing is conclusive between nations until they come to a final treaty of peace, and that a final treaty is binding. Let us try how this doctrine applies to our conduct towards Corsica. Your connection there has cost you three millions sterling. This jewel of Corsica has never been asked for on the part of Great Britain, in this negotiation, or offered to the French. Did ministers, when they took it, say that Corsica was thus to be abandoned? Did they give to the Corsicans any hint that they might do so in any event? By no means, for they annexed it to the Crown of Great Britain. Why do ministers not make a distinction between the case of the Corsicans, and those who chose to abide by the French? Have they not had that opportunity in the course of the late negotiation? Did they not see that the Corsicans, feeling, I suppose, the horrid effects of French anarchy, wishing to exchange them for the benign favours and constant care of Royal greatness, threw themselves under the arms of the Sovereign of happy Britain. If they did so, let me ask, what is the reason that the Corsicans were not even so much as mentioned in the late negotiation? But the minister may say that the Corsicans are no longer under our care. Why? Because the Corsicans, ungrateful people, did not find themselves happier, more free from corruption and court intrigue, more carefully protected from oppression, more attended to in all that constitutes the comfort of a people under the protecting hand of Sir Gilbert Elliot, than they were under the unprincipled Republicans of France. It was, doubtless, under a sense of the ingratitude of the Corsicans that they were thus omitted in the negotiation on the part of magnanimous Great Britain. Suppose the Corsicans were to say to our Sovereign, "We chuse you, George the Third, King of Great Britain, to be our Sovereign, because you are a mild, gracious, and benevolent Prince, and because you are the Sovereign of a free and happy people. We adopt the form of the constitution of England. We approve highly of the right of election in England; give us, we beseech you, the blessings of the British Constitution, let us be annexed to the British Crown, to which we are attached. Relieve us from a hord of robbers and assassins, under whose tyranny we now groan." I understood they did say this, for so the minister told us, and therefore Corsica was, most kindly, annexed to the Crown of Great Britain. Would you then have

have said, as you say now, "that Corsica is not an object to you in a negociation?" Why did not you say so then? Why! Because your object was to delude the Corsicans to answer your own petty policy for the moment. Suppose the Corsicans were to say to you now, "You took us under your protection; why have you abandoned us to the fury of our old masters, whom we deserted from the confidence we had in your justice and magnanimity. Why did you not tell us your intention?" Why! Because you knew, that had you been sincere in telling us your intentions, you could not have prevailed on the Corsicans to join you.

The House will do well to think on the situation of Belgium at this moment. Had you not better do now, that you may be compelled to do a year hence, namely, give up all pretensions whatever to it: and here let us look at our resources.—Wise men never behold an evil without fortitude, and I hope the people of this country behold the diminution of their resources with fortitude. That we are not yet got to the end of them I am ready to admit? but they are not the friends of the people of this country, who tell them they are not now nearer to the end of their resources than they were at the commencement of this war. My belief is, that by equalling your income with your expenditure, which you cannot do but by enlarging your duties very much? by adopting measures that will gradually and really, not fictitiously, improve your trade and enlarge your commerce; you may yet be able to bear your load. We are in a situation which may be improved by wise measures. But if you proceed on the plan which this address opens, that such will be my opinion, or the opinion of any man of reflection a year hence, is not what I now believe: on the contrary, I believe, in my conscience, nay, I think I know, that if you proceed for four years more, upon the same plan as you have proceeded for the four last years, you will be in a situation of irretrievable ruin. Those who aver the contrary, either have not capacity to understand the subject, or are insincere in their assertions. I have no difficulty in saying, that to avert the ruin of this country, there must be a change of system; there must be a change of politicks, at home as well as abroad; What! are we to alter the whole of our constitution, and do as France has done? No such thing. We are not even to alter our constitution. We are only to restore our constitution. When that is done the voice of the people will be heard. That voice will controul the minister. By what

means that is to be done, it is not my business now to specify Whether by a parliamentary reform; or, if by a parliamentary reform, what sort of reform that is to be, are questions which cannot be discussed at this moment. In this object may be included, perhaps, a considerable diminution of the influence of the crown, and so may many other things, but they are all points which cannot be discussed now. I have, however, no difficulty in stating broadly at once, that some measure must be adopted which will make it possible that the voice of the people should be heard. That the voice of the people of England should controul the conduct of the servants of the crown; that the voice of the people should be every thing in great public affairs, and the private opinions, or the wishes of the minister of the Executive government, nothing. That is the pure spirit, was once the letter of our constitution; the letter must be made to speak again the spirit exactly. I say there must be a change of system in the politics of this country, both at home and abroad. If there are those who are personally attached to the minister, be it so. If they think there is danger in changing a minister on popular opinion, be it so. If they think that danger greater than that which must attend a continuance of the present system, be it so; but then let them say so; let them declare it, that the people may know what they have to trust to; for I believe in my conscience that this country cannot have peace, without a change of system in politics, nor without a change of ministers. I must speak plainly upon this subject; I love the constitution under which I was born, but not that which ministers have created. I say that your system must be altered, and ministers must be changed, or you cannot have peace. Do I say this from fancy or from personal enmity, or from a desire to fill the minister's place? Certainly not. I speak from conviction, which has arisen out of a long experience. Two years ago the people of this country wished for peace, and lately a pretended attempt was made to obtain it, but we are now in no better situation for it, than we were then. Ministers tell us that all this is owing to the unreasonableness of the enemy. We have now prosecuted the war for four years, and the effect of it has been, that though the minister has, year after year, assured us that the enemy could not possibly hold out against us, they are now more unreasonable in their views than ever. This being the state of things I cannot help thinking, on the face of it, ministers have miscondacted themselves, and that their measures

measures have not been adequate to the objects they proposed. This point is too clear to require illustration. It may be said; "true, ministers have been unfortunate; but is every unfortunate minister to be censured?" Certainly not; but here the deficiency is so glaring; the misfortunes so numerous, the apparent misconduct so dangerous, that for the safety of the publick, there ought to be a detailed and scrupulous inquiry into these matters. I have an opinion upon the capacity and the conduct of ministers: I need not alledge what that opinion is; others there are, who differ from me. I am ready to join issue upon that point, and to establish my opinion in the event of a fair enquiry. Good God! what a deplorable thing it is that we profit so little by example: many of us are old enough to remember the American war. No man used to say more confidently than I did myself, that there was great misconduct on the part of his Majesty's ministers during that war. I was answered by ministers then, precisely as I am answered by ministers now. "It is not our fault; the whole is owing to the unreasonableness of the Americans." That did not appear to me to be a weighty answer. But, in that case, the House of Commons at last fell in with my opinion; and, long, long, after they ought, long, long, after the country called for it, they withdrew their confidence from ministers: not, however, before this country had endured much calamity. But what was all the calamity under which this country laboured, compared to that which bears upon us now? What was your situation at that time? You knew there was one measure which would put an end to that war—acknowledging the independence of America; you did so; in my opinion much too late; but, however, you did so, and peace was the effect of it. But have you now such a remedy for evils? agree to this address, and then tell me, that you have any thing to expect but ruin, if ministers chuse to follow their plan. Let me here remind the minister himself of what he said when he came into parliament. He was too young to be a member of it at the commencement, but came in a little before the conclusion of the American war. He used, and most worthily used, his great eloquence against that war, and that eloquence became triumphant. He afterwards congratulated this House, and the people of this country upon the event: He said, "the majority of this House have put an end to the American war: I see an administration capable of serving their country." This was an administration of which I formed a part, and I am bound to thank the right honourable

able gentleman for the compliment he was pleased to bestow upon me personally. Of that administration the Marquis of Rockingham was the head; he was a character, dear to me at an early period of my life, and whose memory, time has only rendered more venerable. The right honourable gentleman was then pleased to speak in terms of the highest approbation of that administration. "You have destroyed the war," said he, "and have rendered your country signal service. I trust you, and confide in you; but neither can you be sure of continuing in power, (here, Sir, he proved to be a prophet) nor can you prevent similar disasters befalling your country, unless you strike at the root of the evil." He proposed a remedy for that evil; I do not know whether it would have been effectual if adopted, but he proposed a remedy, and I remember he said at the time, "When the calamities you now feel are forgotten, future wars will be created by future ministers, who will be corrupt; and the voice of the people will not be sufficient to controul them, unless you reform the representation of the people in this House." He has lived to verify his predictions by his own conduct; and he is now driving us to ruin in the very way he predicted. What I now beg of the House is this, that they will examine these matters attentively, and take the part which rational men ought to take to save this land from ruin, which is, to withdraw their confidence from ministers, which will stop them in their wild career. I have stated my opinion of these ministers. I have shewn to you their insincerity in this negotiation. I have shewn to you there is no rational prospect of a termination of this war while you confide in them. In one word, I have shewn to you the cause of your calamities, and have pointed out to you the remedy. I have done my duty, and now call upon you to do yours. I propose to you the following amendment to the address which is now before you. [Mr. Fox moved the same amendment that was brought forward by the *Earl of Guildford* in the House of Peers, and which was inserted in page 575 and 576.]

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* and the *Secretary at War* rose both together, but Mr. *Secretary Dundas* proceeded to the following effect:

Of all the speeches I ever heard in this House, the last, I think, is the most mischievous. Not one word did the right honourable gentleman say to add strength to this country or to favour the negotiation. There was scarcely one word in the whole of his speech that did not go to the protection and encouragement of the enemy. He not only assisted them in the arguments

arguments which they have used themselves; but he suggested to them several ingenious arguments of his own to favour them, and which they failed to produce in the course of the negotiation. He may call this frank and plain dealing, but I cannot help thinking, that, according to the opinions and sentiments of our forefathers, who were as virtuous as he will pretend to be; these things should never be uttered pending a negotiation, when the interests of the country may be at stake, and when certain points may be brought under consideration, which require great caution and great circumspection. I believe it never before occurred to the most inflamed patriot, to the most envenomed oppositionist that ever existed, to make use of his station as a member of Parliament to plead the cause of the enemy.

It is impossible for me to follow the right honourable gentleman through every part of his discussion to-night, and therefore, I shall abandon many of his points in the course of what I have to submit to you upon this subject; and I do so the more readily, because I feel that there is not one of the general topics that he has urged to-night, such as he has not for these two years past, been in the constant habit of alluding to. All these topics we have heard from him again, again and again; and, he must forgive me if I say, that, although every thing that comes from him, comes with great ingenuity, there is neither much novelty, nor any additional skill in what he has advanced to-night. There is nothing new in any part of his speech, except that which relates to the negotiation between us and the government of France. I shall place out of my view all he has said on the commencement of the war. It is a topic which Parliament has often discussed. He has said nothing new upon it, nor can I say any thing new upon it in reply to him; and therefore, he will forgive me if I do not follow him. I shall leave out of the question also, every thing he has said upon the necessity of a change in our system at home; and of the necessity which, he says, there is for a change of his Majesty's servants. It is not for me to say one word upon these points. Who should succeed his Majesty's present servants in case they should be dismissed, I need not say one word; that difficulty is a good deal removed by the right honourable gentleman himself. He has often and often made his appeal to those who are more competent to judge of that question than myself. He has been telling the publick at large for many, many years, that no person is fit to manage the affairs of this country but himself. He has said so for the
last

last twelve years at least. If a change of the servants of government takes place, God forbid that there should not be in this country, many men fit to manage its affairs; but the country have not acquiesced with him in the person who ought to be their leader. Granting that this war has been unsuccessful; granting that his Majesty's ministers are unfit for their situations, and that, therefore, they ought to be succeeded by others; is it not singular and extraordinary, that a gentleman who has been day after day advertising himself as a man the best fitted to fill up their places, that the country is not yet persuaded upon that subject? To his country he has made many appeals to that effect. This was the concluding part of his speech near the conclusion of the last Parliament; when he published his own qualifications. Is it not singular, I say, that, notwithstanding all this, there was not an universal outcry for a change of administration. That we are all inferior to him, is a point on which I will not say a word. All I mean to say is, that when he makes his appeal to the publick, that he is the fittest man in this country to conduct its affairs, there has been hitherto no general manifestation of that being the opinion of the publick; nor that the publick have ever passed any such verdict upon his Majesty's present ministers, as that gentleman has done. Having said this, I beg leave to come to the only question which is now before you; and in doing so, I must remind you of the communication from the throne at the opening of the present Parliament. [Mr. Dundas read that part of the King's Speech which related to the opening of the negotiation.] He then proceeded—By this you see, that a negotiation was opened, ministers are pledged to the sincerity of that negotiation; on that sincerity the whole of the question now before you rests. The proposed amendment is right, upon the professed principle of the right honourable gentleman; for it puts the question of our sincerity to issue before the House. I desire now to make my humble appeal to the House upon that issue, and to call for its judgment. If there are any among you who think that ministers were not sincere in their professed wishes for peace [a cry of Order! Order] I say if there is one member of this House who thinks with the right honourable gentleman who moved this amendment, that we were insincere in our wishes for peace in the negotiation, let him express that opinion by voting for the proposed amendment. I therefore call on you, as men of candour and integrity, to lay your hands upon your breasts, and give your opinions on the question as I have

have stated it, and as the right honourable gentleman has stated it, for I admit he has stated it fairly, we are now at issue with him upon it; and the House is to decide between us. I am sure the House will not forget what my right honourable friend said to-night on the difficulties that were repeatedly thrown in the way of the negotiation by the enemy. They will remember what steps were taken by us to commence the negotiation, and how many discouraging events were thrown in the way. Ministers were, however, not to be discouraged; and, accordingly, a negociator was sent to Paris with a view to negotiate for peace. He arrived at Paris, and delivered in a confidential memorial. It is upon this document that the right honourable gentleman has offered to you a variety of criticisms. Now, upon that point, I have only to say, that we desired nothing for ourselves from the French; offered to give up all that we had gained from them; on account of obtaining for our allies what we had not the choice of omitting to ask; and thus we proceeded on the agreed basis of the treaty. Here let me observe, that while the right honourable gentleman talks of the expence of the war and the effusion of blood, I regret it as much as he can do; but then I cannot admit it to be said, that this is a war unjustly entered into on our part, or that it has been an unsuccessful war to this country. I say, that from the earliest period of this country, down to the present war, there has not been one moment which has displayed more glory to this country than this war has done. We never stood in a predicament which has been so glorious in its event to this country as we do now in the fourth year of the present war. I say your offers to the enemy have been highly generous. You have offered to them all you have taken from them, in order to obtain compensation for your ally. The right honourable gentleman asks, What right has the Emperor to ask back of the French what they have taken from him, while he has taken from them nothing? Why if the case rested there, he would have no reason to ask much perhaps: but it should be recollected that the Emperor is the ally of England, from whom the France has taken nothing, but who has taken much from France; the Emperor and we, put, as it were, our power into one common stock, and it is not merely as Emperor that we propose these restorations to him, but also as the ally of England; with both which powers France is at war, that we make these proposals.

I come now to say a few words on the state of Holland. With regard to that country, I am perfectly ready to defend

what I formerly said upon that subject. I did not utter that opinion without an attentive consideration. I am distinctly of opinion, that, if we consult the interest of that country, or of any country under Heaven, the opinion which I gave upon that subject will be found to be correct. It was my opinion when Holland and this country were friends, as they would still have been if there were not a French faction there; and the people of that country also would be of my opinion. I say, therefore, with respect to the Cape of Good Hope, it will be the greatest calamity that can befall even Holland, if it should be taken out of our hands. No power will ever try to do so but with a hostile view to the trade of that country and of this; whereas, if the Cape of Good Hope remains in the hands of this country, we shall not take away any part of the trade or commerce of Holland, but we may ultimately protect that very trade and commerce by our possession of the Cape. I shall prove the expence of the establishment to keep the Cape cannot be borne by the Dutch as it can by us, and that they cannot keep up conveniently a sufficient establishment to protect it. I say that neither the French nor any other power can ask or wish for the possession of the Cape without a view of hostility to your East India possessions and trade.

The right honourable gentleman asks, Why we did not come forward at once in this negotiation, and state broadly all you could concede in the last extremity? He says, we might have done this safely if we knew they would have been rejected by the enemy, and this would have shewn to the world our candour. I tell him candidly, I do not think that to be good policy at any time in a negotiation, and least of all at this time, and under all the circumstances of the present contest.

With regard to Belgium, the right honourable gentleman says, he thinks it an object to this country that it should not remain in the hands of the enemy; but he doubts whether it is worth the sacrifices which we must make to obtain it. With regard to the first point, namely, that Belgium is a great object to us, I agree with him entirely, and feel as much as he can in wishing that it should not remain in the hands of France. But as to the sacrifices which we may be called upon make, in order to wrest it from the enemy, I beg leave to say, that I do not take my proposition from a gentleman on one side, or another side of the House at this moment. I have a higher authority than that of any individual member; I have the concurring opinion of the best politicians

cians in Europe for centuries, that the Austrian Netherlands ought not to be in the power of France; accordingly we have, at different periods, for centuries, been engaged, indeed uniformly, except in part of the reign of the Steuarts, in preventing the Austrian Netherlands being in the power of France, and when one of the race of Steuarts adopted a contrary line of conduct, the Parliament stepped forward and entered into a solemn resolution upon that subject. This was also the opinion of King William, which was one great reason for his coming over, and being received as the Sovereign of these realms: I appeal also to the whole history of France to fortify this opinion. I know it was a maxim on the Continent, that the possession of one acre of the Austrian Netherlands was worth a province any where else. This was a maxim held out in France by the ablest politicians. Why do I state this to the House? I do it to shew that they should not rashly, hastily, without consideration, adopt any system that tends to favour the ambition of France, and to obtain these possessions is not the policy of France now only, but has been the constant policy of France for ages, and as constantly the interest of other powers to oppose it. I desire you to reflect on these opinions as I have stated them; and to reflect on the sentiments stated in the amendment. And here let me ask the right honourable gentleman whither he means to carry this frankness, this candour of his, that although the wisdom and policy of our ancestors are all against him, that yet, as a good citizen or a good subject, he ought to tell the enemies of his country they should be obstinate in keeping and retaining possession of the Austrian Netherlands? We are told in the British Parliament, that we are not likely to obtain the Netherlands, and that twelve months hence we may be in a worse situation than we are now: and the right honourable gentleman follows this up, with a wish that we may abandon all attempts to regain the Netherlands. I do not chuse to join him in that wish. He may entertain it upon some vague notions of the general happiness of the human race, but, if he means to draw any practical conclusion from that wish, he will fail in his attempt: and I wish he would not try it, because I believe all these general observations to be pernicious to his country. I do not quarrel with him for his ardour for general happiness, but I wish he would keep his ardour within bounds that may consist with the interests of Great Britain; for he has been telling the House, that they ought to give up all hopes of seeing that

interest preserved. He has told us that the cause of the French is a popular cause in the Netherlands. Why is it a popular cause? Why are the French to be successful, and the Austrians not to be so? Is it perfectly impossible for the Emperor, with the aid of this country, or other allies, to regain the Austrian Netherlands? Or may not the Emperor and his allies gain them, as they have gained other places, at the end of the campaign. I am not so presumptuous as to say what will be the fate of the war, that is in the womb of time; but I am far from thinking that regaining the Austrian Netherlands is a hopeless project, as the right honourable gentleman has stated it be.

If we called upon this House to pledge itself to any terms of peace, there might then be some reason to cavil at the Address, but the House is not called upon to pledge itself to any specific terms whatever. The only object is to leave this war in the hands of the Executive Government, without committing Parliament to any thing. Parliament is only called upon to thank his Majesty for his gracious communication, and to regret that his endeavours to obtain peace have not been attended with success, and that the House will co-operate with his Majesty to obtain that desirable object; that is the substance of the Address. The amendment moved by the right hon. gentleman calls in question the sincerity of his Majesty's ministers in the course of the negotiation. That is fair, we are at issue upon that point, and the House is to judge between us. I say, the foundation of the rupture of the negotiation is this, that the French have declared they will not do any thing except that which is consistent with their own views of objects, and the meaning of their constitution, and of treaties, as they chuse to explain; and as that is really so, I did flatter myself there would have been no difference of opinion upon this Address. The question then is reduced to this, whether we should not agree to surrender to France every thing we had taken, and then begin to treat, having nothing in our hands to treat about? We did the best we could according to our judgments. If you think that indeed we have been insincere in this negotiation, say so. If you think we ought to be dismissed, and that we deserve your censure, declare it; but do not mix your disapprobation of us with other matter, to weaken the hands of the Executive Government of the country. I say, deprive us of all power, if you please. If we have deceived you, deprive us of the means of deceiving you again; but do not, through our side, give such a vital blow to your country as to strengthen the
hand

hands of its enemies. This, I say, you will do, if you adopt this amendment. This is a question of great importance to ministers undoubtedly, for it involves every thing that is valuable to them personally; but it is a question not worth considering either the one way or the other, when compared with the interest of the country which it involves. If any one has a motion to make against ministers, let him bring it forward in the shape of a specific proposition, and put us upon our defence; but do not adopt a measure which tends to weaken the resources of your own country, and to strengthen the hands of your enemies.

Mr. Grey said, at so late an hour I should not attempt to submit my sentiments to the House, did I not feel it to be absolutely necessary to take notice of the observations of the right hon. gentleman who spoke last, and to set right, as far as I can do so, before this House, and to this country, the conduct of my right hon. friend, not that he needs an advocate, but that what was falsely imputed should not pass unnoticed. Another reason I have for thus addressing the House is, that the nature of the amendment proposed by my right hon. friend may not have affixed to it the character which the right hon. gentleman has been pleased to bestow upon it. He laments that my right hon. friend in pleading as the advocate of the people of England, did not fall upon any topic, nor urge an argument which could tend to assist the people of England, or to strengthen the hands of government at this eventful crisis.—It has been the invariable policy of his Majesty's present ministers, a policy in which they have been but too successful in this House, and which they pursue daily, to blend and connect themselves and their characters with the fate of government, and to represent every attack upon them for their incapacity and perverseness, of which the history of this war has given us so many melancholy proofs, as an attack upon the constitution. I hope the day will come when, by a full and free enquiry, the conduct of administration in this, as well as many other respects, will be manifested to the world through the voice of Parliament, and that we shall come to some measure to avoid a repetition of such conduct as has brought upon this country such dreadful calamity as it now suffers. An attack upon his Majesty's ministers, for their conduct in the present war, so far from being an attack upon the constitution, is a defence of it, inasmuch as the whole of their conduct in this war has been hostile to the principles of that constitution. I understand the negotiation with France is entirely broken off, for the

prefer.

present at least. I say this from the knowledge I have of the practice of the right hon. gentleman who spoke last, for it was his constant rule to refuse all information whatever upon the subject, stating it was improper to grant any, because a negociation was pending; and now that I see that the papers of that negociation are upon your table, I can have no doubt that such negociation is at an end. He has now no reason for refusing any further information which may be wanting, since the cause which he assigned for withholding it no longer exists. If we call for any further information, he cannot arraign us without arraigning himself for his former practice. He chuses, however, now to attack my right hon. friend, which was singular from the manner in which that attack was made. My hon. friend, it seems, advertises for the place of a minister. Whether the most profound judgment; the most solid as, well as the most brilliant talents; whether a life devoted to the publick service; whether the most disinterested spirit and an unabated zeal for the welfare of his country, although not distinguished by any mark of the Royal favour, be, or be not, the best claims for the publick confidence, let the publick judge. Such is certainly the condition of my right hon. friend. If the hour was come, and I heartily wish it was, as a friend to my country, and particularly to its constitution, when my right hon. friend was called into that situation for which, in my conscience, I believe he is above all others qualified, he shall not want support from me while I can give him any. He made the same objections to the conduct of ministers in the American war; he was told then, as he is told now, that he was advertising for the place of a minister. The people would have had reason to rejoice had they taken his advice sooner. My right hon. friend has proceeded upon the same principle in this war. He is answered in the same way; and I am sure the hour is at hand when the people will manifest their sorrow that they did not take his advice sooner. In the performance of a great publick duty, he is told he is pleading against his country. I know he is pleading for his country; and I know he is not to be discouraged by any outcry that may be raised against him. I agree with him, that the system which ministers have adopted in this war must be altered; and that nothing else can save this country from ruin. Whatever shame or disgrace may attach to that assertion, I beg leave to lay in a claim to a share of it. Whatever may be the event of the debate this night, I am confident that the publick will hereafter thank my hon. friend for the part that he has taken throughout

throughout the war. They will consider him not as the enemy, but the best friend of his country. The right hon. gentleman passed over that part of my right hon. friend's speech which touched upon the origin of the war, in which he was prudent, since he knew he could not answer it; but let me ask that right hon. gentleman, whether, in discussing the renewal of a war (for so the present case may be said to be), it is not fair to enter into its origin, and to observe upon its progress, in order to form some rational conjecture on its probable conclusion? And let me then ask him, whether there was one comment made use of by my right hon. friend that was not well applied? It is the observation of a great political writer that, in conducting a war, the parties should never forget that the object of it is peace. Try the present war by that standard, and then see what your condition is. This war was commenced by our ministers from their hatred to the principles of liberty. It has been carried on upon that hatred. In the progress of it, language has been used, which has irritated your enemies so much, that, to obtain peace while they remain in power, will be impracticable—But it seems the war has been successful, on our part, both by sea and land. No man admires, more than I do, the valour which has distinguished our forces, but compare it with your prospect, and then see what your condition is.

After taking a short view of the achievements of this country and those of the French Republick, and maintaining that the balance was prodigiously in favour of the latter, Mr. Grey proceeded thus—It is not for me to revert to the different periods at which this negotiation might have been proposed with better effect than it can be now. We all feel the truth of that observation. We see that the French Republick is established in spite of us; and I think there are but few of us who do not look back with regret on the various opportunities we have lost of negotiating to advantage. But the right hon. gentleman admits that the Amendment puts the question of the minister's sincerity in the negotiation to issue. In that I agree with him; but when he comes to state that which is not in the Amendment, and which, if it was, I should not vote for it, his statement ought to be corrected. He says, it goes to strike a blow against the vitals of the country. He did not attend to the Amendment, or he would not have spoken of it as he did. The Amendment only goes to shew that we lament the negotiation was broken off, because ministers were not sincere in their professions for peace; and
states

states the impropriety of insisting on the French giving up Belgium as a *sine qua non* in our view of peace; and also that the French have insisted on retaining Belgium with equal pertinacity; thus it leaves the whole question open to any future negotiation.

Mr. Grey traced the course which ministers had taken from the time of making the request by Mr. Wickham to the breaking off of the late negotiation at Paris, and discussed it at great length; and likewise the terms which were offered by Lord Malmesbury to the French; all of which, he maintained, proved the insincerity of the ministers in the whole of the negotiation. He concluded thus—consider the debt and taxes with which this country is already loaded; consider what you must add to that load if you give yourselves up to the will of the minister, as you will, if you agree to the address, but from which you will be saved if you agree to the amendment; consider the oceans of blood which you will cause to flow by confiding in the minister; consider the misery that must follow if you do; and then consider what is your duty to your country and to mankind at this awful moment

After which the House divided,

<i>Ayes</i> (for the Amendment),	-	-	37
<i>Noes</i> (against it),	-	-	212

<i>Majority,</i>	175
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The Address was then agreed to.

Mr. Grey then moved, that the House be called over on the 16th of January next, which was seconded by Mr. Fox, and opposed by the *Chancellor of the Exchequer*. The House divided,

<i>Ayes</i> (for the Motion),	-	-	31
<i>Noes</i> (against it),	-	-	164

<i>Majority,</i>	133
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Adjourned, at two o'clock, till the next day.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

SATURDAY, December 31.

The *Speaker* informed the House that the person employed to compile an index to the journals from the 35th to the 45th volume inclusive had finished his work, and that copies were left in the office of the Clerk of the Journals for such members as might call for them.

Doctor

Doctor *Laurence* stated, that he intended to make a motion, after the recess, in order to ascertain the situation in which we now stand, from the abrupt conclusion of the late negociation. He declared that he cordially agreed in the address to his Majesty, so far as it went to a vigorous prosecution of the war ; and the discretion in that respect, which was left open to his Majesty's ministers, he considered as highly wise, though it had been much censured on the other side of the House. It had been said in the debate of the preceding night, that the negociation was not yet absolutely closed. One channel was still reserved by our enemies. With them it rested to avail themselves of it for explaining away that basis, which they had finally proposed under the authority, as they told us, of their best Publicists, but which he, as an unenlightened Publicist of the old school, only thought more inadmissible, the more he reflected upon it ;—the basis of *their* constitution, *their* laws, and *their* treaties. At present the recess would occasion a necessary pause. But when Parliament met again, should there be no essential variation in the state of things, he would make his intended motion on the first vacant day. His object would be, to bring to a fair issue, if possible, once for all, certain topics of declamation perpetually introduced on the other side of the House, whenever the present war was the subject of discussion ; and to unite, as far as might be possible, all those who originally thought, and still think, that the war was and is just and necessary.

Mr. *Douglas* moved, " That this House should receive no petitions for private bills after the 20th of February next." Ordered.

The Election Committees that stood in the orders of the House for discussion early in February, were severally adjourned to the end of that month.

The order for the second reading of the bill for removing the Assizes, held at Thetford, to Norwich, was postponed to the 25th of February.

Lord *Stopford* appeared at the bar, and stated, that his Majesty had received with great satisfaction, the expressions of attachment which his faithful Commons had made in their Address. His Majesty had also ordered a copy of the Treaty between him and the Prince of Hesse Darmstadt to be laid before the House.

The bill for the relief of the Poor was committed.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* stated, that the blanks being filled up in the committee, it was his intention to propose,

pose, as he had formerly stated to the House, that the bill should be printed, so that gentlemen might have an opportunity of considering it during the recess.

Mr. *Jekyll* reminded the hon. gentleman that it had been suggested to print more copies than would serve members of parliament only, for the purpose of distribution to persons out of that House, who could afford much useful information connected with the object of the bill. He hoped that this suggestion was not to be overlooked.

The *Speaker* said, that when a bill had gone through a committee, and was ordered to be printed, it was the usual practice for the person who filled the chair to order what number of copies he thought necessary. From the number of applications that had been made to him, on account of this bill, he thought that he should order at least 1500 copies to be printed. The press, however, should not be broke down, and if it should be found to be necessary to print more, they could thus be afforded at a proportional less expence than making a new edition.

The House being resumed, the report was received.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said he would move an early day after the holidays for the recommitment of the bill, with the view, that after some amendments had been made, it might be again recommitteed before it was engrossed. He moved that the bill be taken into farther consideration on Friday, the 17th of February next. Ordered. And also that the bill be printed.

Mr. *Owen*, from the India House, brought up certain papers, pursuant to the orders of the House of the 22d and 27th of this month. These papers were laid on the table, and ordered to be printed.

Adjourned to Tuesday the 14th of February next.

LIST OF THE MINORITY ON THE AMENDMENT OF MR. FOX,
TO THE ADDRESS FOR THE CONTINUANCE OF THE WAR.

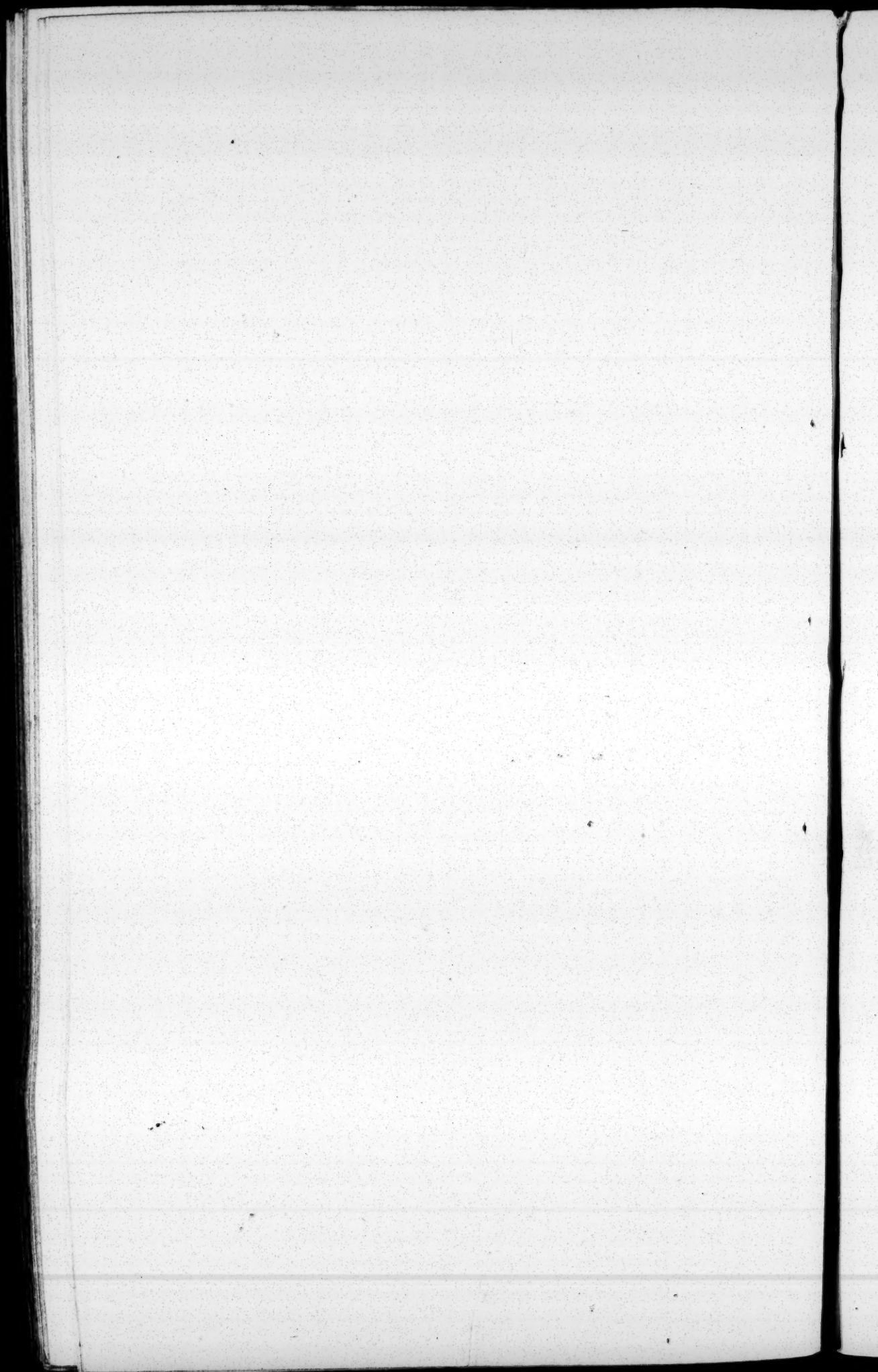
Baker, J.
Bamfylde, Sir C.
Barclay, G.
Biddulph, R.
Bouverie, Hon. E.
Brogden, J.
Burch, J. R.
Burdett, F.
Byng, G.
Combe, Alderman
Courtenay, J.
Erfkine, Hon. T.
Fox, C. J.
Grey, C.
Hare, J.
Huffey, W.
Jefferys, N.
Nicholls, J.
North, D.

Peirse, H.
Plumer, W.
Richardson, J.
Russell, Lord W.
Scudamore, J.
Sheridan, R. B.
Shum, G.
Smith, W.
Spencer, Lord R.
Stanly, Lord
Taylor, M. A.
Thompson, T.
Tierney, G.
Tufton, Hon. H.
Tufton, Hon. J.
Whitbread, S.
Walwyn, J.
Western, C. C.

TELLERS.

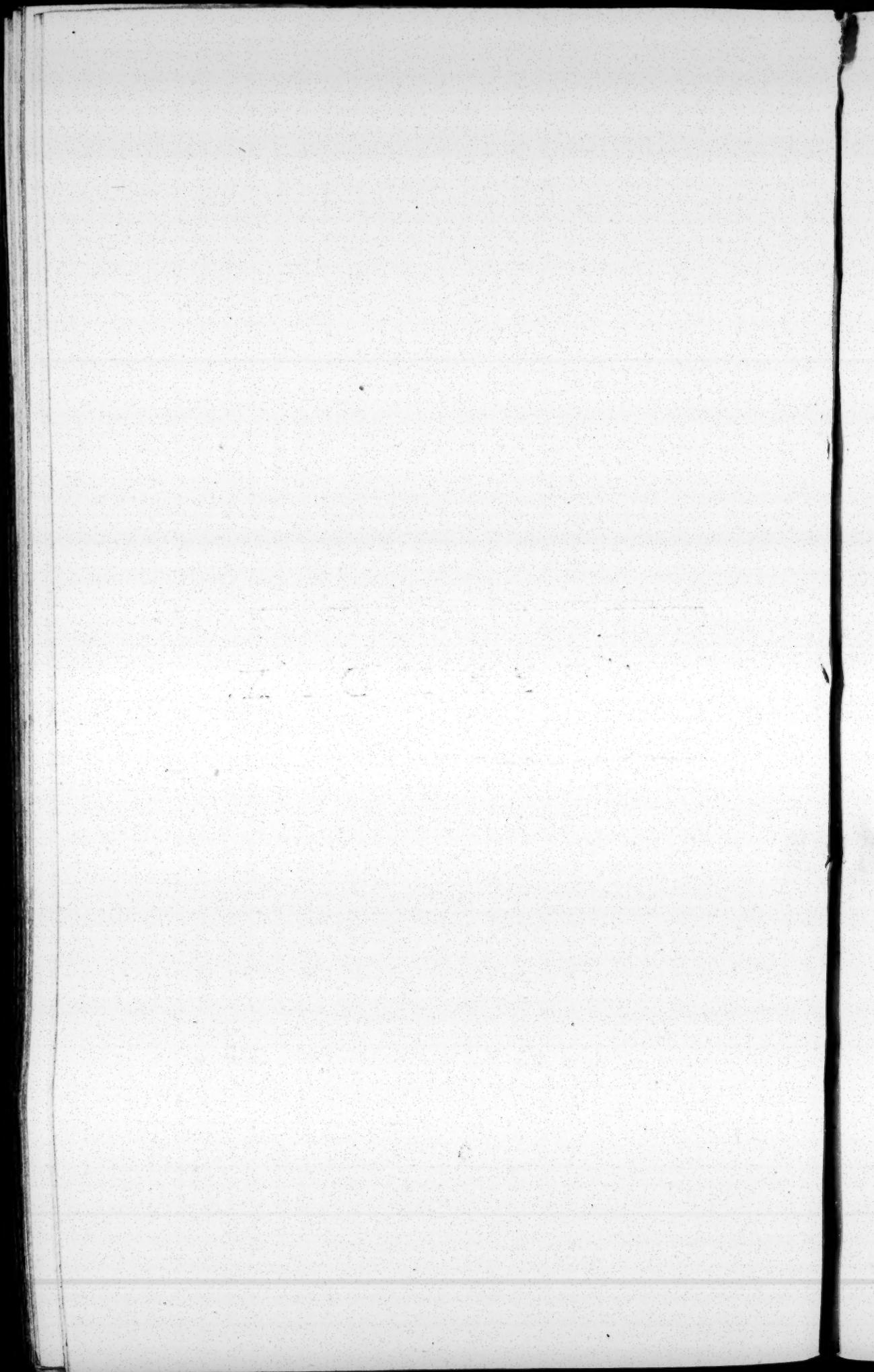
Jekyll, J.

Tarleton, General



A P P E N D I X.

VOL. I. 1796.



APPENDIX:

CONTAINING

TREATIES, STATE PAPERS, PARLIAMENTARY
REPORTS, AUTHENTIC DOCUMENTS, &c.

MEMORIAL

DELIVERED TO THE MINISTER OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC
FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, BY LORD MALMESBURY.

HIS Britannic Majesty desiring as he has already declared, to contribute, as far as depends on himself, to the re-establishment of publick tranquillity, and to ensure by the means of just, honourable and solid conditions of peace, the future repose of Europe; his Majesty is of opinion, that the best means of attaining, with all possible expedition, that salutary end, will be to agree, at the beginning of the negociation, on the general principle which shall serve as a basis for the definitive arrangements.

The first object of the negociation for peace generally relate to the restitutions and cessions which the respective parties have mutually to demand, in consequence of the events of the war.

Great Britain, after the uninterrupted success of her naval war, finds herself in a situation to have no restitution to demand of France, from which, on the contrary, she has taken establishments and colonies of the highest importance, and of a value almost incalculable.

But, on the other hand, France has made, on the continent of Europe, conquests, to which his Majesty can be the less indifferent, as the most important interests of his people, and the most sacred engagements of his crown, are essentially implicated therein.

The magnanimity of the king, his inviolable good faith, and his desire to restore repose to so many nations, lead him, in this situation of affairs, to consider the means of procuring terms of peace just and equitable for all the Belligerent powers, and calculated to ensure in future the general tranquillity.

It is, on this footing then, that he proposes to negotiate, by offering to compensate France by proportionable restitutions, for those arrangements to which she will be called upon to consent, in order to satisfy the just demands of the king's allies, and to preserve the political balance of Europe.

Having made this first overture, his Majesty will in the sequel, explain himself in a more extensive manner, on the application of

this principle to the different objects which may be discussed between the respective parties.

It is this application which will constitute the subject of those discussions into which his Majesty hath authorised his minister to enter, as soon as the principle to be adopted as the general basis of the negotiation is known.

But his Majesty cannot dispense with declaring, that if this generous and equitable offer shall not be accepted, or if, unfortunately, the discussion which may ensue, may fail in the desired effect, neither this general proposition, nor those more detailed which may result from it, shall be regarded, in any case, as points, agreed upon or accorded by his Majesty.

(Signed)

MALMESBURY.

*Minister Plenipotentiary from
his Britannick Majesty.*

Paris, October 24th 1796.

REPORT TO THE DIRECTORY

BY THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS THE 4TH BRUMAIRE, (OCT. 25.)

The Executive Directory having furnished me with full powers to treat for peace with Great Britain, I had yesterday (3d Brumaire) my first conference with Lord Malmesbury, plenipotentiary commissioner of his Britannick Majesty. He presented to me the original of his powers, sealed with the seal of Great Britain, and certified the copy which he had before presented to me unsigned, and which I laid before the directory. I reciprocally exhibited to him my powers, and gave him a certified copy. It was agreed that the originals should be exchanged upon the definitive settlement of the articles, and before their signature.

We entered into this discussion. Lord Malmesbury presented to me the memorial which I laid before the Directory. I observed to him, that, speaking in the name of the allies of Great Britain, and stipulating for their interests, he was, doubtless, furnished with their powers and instructions. He answered me, that he was not; but that when the Directory should have explained itself upon the principle laid down in his memorial, he would expedite couriers to give to the different courts an account of the negotiations, and to receive their orders. I demanded of him if he could, at least, specify the principle of concession in what concerned the republic and the government of Great Britain? He replied, that after the Directory should have explained itself, he would send a courier and demand instructions on this point. I then thought it my duty to say to Lord Malmesbury, that I would lay his memorial before the Directory; that I would take its orders, and impart to him its answer.

(Signed)

CHA. DELACROIX.

ANSWER

ANSWER OF THE DIRECTORY.

The Executive Directory orders the minister for foreign affairs to make the following answer to Lord Malmesbury.

The Executive Directory see with pain, that at the moment when they had reason to hope for the very speedy return of peace between the French Republick and his Britannick Majesty, the proposition of Lord Malmesbury offers nothing but dilatory, or very distant means of bringing the negociation to a conclusion.

The Directory observe, that if Lord Malmesbury would have treated separately, as he was formally authorised by the tenor of his credentials, the negociations might have been considerably abridged; that the necessity of balancing with the interests of the two powers, those of the allies of Great Britain, multiplies the combinations, increases the difficulties, tends to the formation of a congress, the forms of which it is known are always tardy, and requires the accession of powers, which hitherto have displayed no desire of accommodation, and have not given to Lord Malmesbury himself, according to his own declaration, any power to stipulate for them.

Thus, without prejudicing the intentions of Lord Malmesbury; without drawing any conclusion from the circumstance of his declaration not appearing to accord with his credentials; without supposing that he had received any secret instructions, which would destroy the effect of his ostensible powers; without pretending, in short, to assert that the British government have had a double object in view; to prevent, by general propositions, the partial propositions of other powers, and to obtain from the people of England the means of continuing the war, by throwing upon the Republic the odium of a delay occasioned by themselves; the Executive Directory cannot but perceive, that the proposition of Lord Malmesbury is nothing more than a renewal, under more amicable forms, of the propositions made last year by M. Wickham, and that it presents but a distant hope of peace.

The Executive Directory farther observe, with regard to the principle of cession advanced by Lord Malmesbury, that such principle, presented in a vague and insulated manner, cannot serve as the basis of negociation; that the first points of consideration are, the common necessity of a just and solid peace, the political equilibrium which absolute cession might destroy, and then the means which the Belligerent powers may possess; the one to retain conquests at a time when it was supported by a great number of allies now detached from the coalition; and the other, to recover them at a time when those who were at first its enemies, have, almost all, either become its allies or neuter.

Nevertheless, the Executive Directory, animated with an ardent desire of putting a stop to the scourge of war, and to prove that they will not reject any means of reconciliation, declare, that as soon

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soon as Lord Malmesbury shall exhibit to the minister for Foreign affairs sufficient powers from the Allies of Great Britain, for stipulating for their respective interests, accompanied by a promise on their part to subscribe to whatever shall be concluded in their names, the Executive Directory will give a speedy answer to the specific propositions which shall be submitted to them, and that the difficulties shall be removed, as far as may be consistent with the safety and dignity of the French Republick

(Signed)

REVEILLERE LEPEAUX, *President.*
LAGARDE, *General Secretary.*

SPANISH MANIFESTO.

DECREE OF THE COURT OF SPAIN AGAINST GREAT BRITAIN.

MADRID, OCT. 11.

His Majesty has transmitted to all his councils a Decree of the following tenor.

“ One of the principal motives that determined me to make peace with the French Republick as soon as its Government had begun to assume a regular and stable form, was the manner in which England behaved to me during the whole of the war, and the just mistrust which I ought to feel for the future from the experience of her bad faith, which began to be manifested at the most critical moment of the first campaign; in the manner with which Admiral Hood treated my squadron at Toulon, where he was employed solely in ruining all that he could not carry away himself; and afterwards in the expedition which he undertook against the island of Corsica—an expedition which he undertook without the knowledge, and which he concealed with the greatest care from Don Juande Langara, while they were together at Toulon.

“ This same bad faith, the English minister has suffered clearly to appear by his silence upon the subject of all his negotiations with other powers particularly in the treaty concluded on the 9th of November 1794 with the United States of America without any regard to my rights, which were well known to him. I remarked it again in his repugnance to the adoption of my plans and ideas which might accelerate the termination of the war, and in the vague reply which Lord Granville gave to my Ambassador the Marquis del Campo, when he demanded succours of him to continue it. He completely confirmed me in the certainty of his bad faith by the injustice with which he appropriated the rich cargo of the Spanish ship *le Sant Jago*, or *l'Achille*, at first taken by the French and afterwards re-taken by the English squadron, and which ought to have been restored to me according to the Convention made between the Secretary of State and Lord St. Helens, Ambassador from his Britannick Majesty; afterwards by the detention of all the ammunition which arrived in the Dutch ships for the supply of my squadrons, by affecting always different difficulties to put off the restitution of them. Finally, I could no longer

longer entertain doubt of the bad faith of England, when I learnt the frequent landing from her ships upon the coasts of Chili and Peru, in order to carry on a contraband trade, and to reconnoitre the shore under the pretence of fishing for whales, a privilege which she pretended to have granted her by the Convention of Nootka. Such were the proceedings of the British minister to cement the ties of friendship and reciprocal confidence, which he had engaged to maintain according to our Convention of the 25th May 1793.

“ Since I have made peace with the French Republick, not only have I had stronger motives for supposing an intention on the part of England to attack my possessions in America, but I have also received direct insults which persuade me that the English minister wishes to oblige me to adopt a part contrary to the interests of humanity, torn by the bloody war which ravages Europe, for the termination of which I have not ceased to offer my good offices, and to testify my constant solicitude.

“ In fact, England has developed her intentions, has clearly evinced her project of getting possession of my territories, by sending to the Antilles a considerable force, and particularly destined against St. Domingo, as the proclamations of her general in that island clearly demonstrate. She has also made known her intentions by the establishments which her commercial companies have formed upon the banks of the Missouri, in South America, with the design of penetrating through those countries to the South sea. Finally, by the conquest which she has made of the colony of Demarary, belonging to the Dutch, and whose advantageous position puts her in a condition to get possession of posts still more important.

“ But there can no longer remain any doubt of the hostile nature of these projects, when I consider the frequent insults to my flag, the acts of violence committed in the Mediterranean by her frigates, which have carried away soldiers coming from Genoa to Barcelona, on board Spanish ships, to complete my armies; the piracies and exactions which the Corsican and Anglo-Corsican corsairs, protected by the English government of that island, exercise against the Spanish and even upon the coasts of Catalonia, and the different Spanish ships laden with Spanish property, and carried to England, under the most frivolous pretences, and especially the rich cargo of the Spanish ship *Minerva*, on which an embargo was laid in the most insulting manner to my flag, and the removal of which could not be obtained, though it was demonstrated before the competent tribunals that this rich cargo was Spanish property.

“ The attack committed upon my Ambassador, Don Simon de las Casas, by a Tribunal of London, which decreed his arrest, founded upon the demand of a very small sum, which was claimed by the undertaker of an embarkation. Finally, the Spanish territory has been violated in an intolerable manner upon the coasts of Galicia and Alicant by the English ships the *Cameleon* and the *Kangaroo*. Moreover, Captain George Vaughan, commodore of the *Alarm*, behaved in a manner equally insolent and scandalous in the island of Trinity, where he landed with drums beating and flags flying, to attack the French, and to avenge the injuries which

which he pretended to have received, disturbing by the violation of the rights of my sovereignty, the tranquility of the inhabitants of the island.

"By all these insults, equally deep and unparalleled, that nation has proved to the universe, that she recognizes no other laws than the aggrandizement of her commerce; and by their despotism which has exhausted my patience and moderation, she has forced me, as well to support the honour of my crown, as to protect my people against her attacks, to declare war against the King of England, his kingdom and vassals, and to give orders and take the necessary measures for the defence of my domains, and my subjects, and to repulse the enemy."

Done at the Palace of St.

Signed by the KING and the Secretary
of the Council of war.

Laurenzo, Oct. 5 1796.

On Saturday the 8th of Oct. war was proclaimed at Madrid in the usual form.

TREATY OF PEACE CONCLUDED BETWEEN THE FRENCH REPUBLIC AND HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF THE TWO SICILIES.

The FRENCH REPUBLIC and his Majesty the KING OF THE TWO SICILIES, equally animated with the desire to make the advantages of peace succeed to the miseries inseparable from war, have named, viz. the Executive Directory, in the name of the French Republic, the citizen *Charles Delacroix*, minister for Foreign affairs; and his majesty the KING OF THE TWO SICILIES, the *Prince Belmonte Pignatelli* gentleman of the Chamber, and his Envoy Extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to his Catholic Majesty, to treat, in their name, the clauses and conditions proper to re-establish good understanding and friendship between the two powers, who, after having exchanged their respective full powers, have agreed on the following articles:

Article I. There shall be peace, friendship, and good understanding between the French republic and his Majesty the king of the Two Sicilies; in consequence, all hostilities shall definitely cease, reckoning from the day of the exchange of the ratification of the present treaty. Meanwhile, and till that period, the conditions stipulated by the armistice concluded on the 17th prairial of the 4th year (5th of June, 1796) shall continue to have full power and effect.

II. Every anterior act, engagement, or convention on the one part or the other of the two contracting parties, which are contrary to the present treaty, are revoked, and shall be regarded as null, and of no effect; in consequence, during the course of the present war, neither of the two powers shall furnish to the enemies of the other any succours of troops, ships, arms, warlike stores, provisions, or money, under whatever title or denomination that may be.

III. His Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies shall observe the most strict neutrality towards all the belligerent powers; in consequence he pledges himself to prevent indiscriminately access to his ports to all armed ships of war belonging to

to the said powers, which shall exceed four, according to the regulations acknowledged by the said neutrality. All stores or merchandize known by the name of contraband, shall be refused them.

IV. All security and protection shall be granted against all persons whatever, in the ports and roads of the Two Sicilies, to all French merchantmen, of whatsoever number they may be, and to all the ships of war of the Republic, not exceeding the number specified in the above article.

V. The French Republic and the king of the Two Sicilies engage to take off the sequestration from all effects, revenues, goods seized, confiscated and kept from the citizens or subjects of both powers, in consequence of the present war, and to admit them respectively to the legal exercise of all civil rights that may belong to them.

VI. All prisoners made on one side or the other, comprising mariners and sailors, shall be reciprocally restored within a month, reckoning from the exchange of the ratification of the present treaty, paying the debts which they may have contracted during their captivity; the sick and wounded shall continue to be taken care of in their respective hospitals, and shall be restored upon their recovery.

VII. To give a proof of his friendship for the French Republic, and of his sincere desire to maintain the most perfect harmony between the two powers, his Majesty the king of the Two Sicilies consents to set at liberty every French citizen who may have been arrested and detained in the States, on account of his political opinions respecting the French Revolution; all goods and property, moveable or immovable, which may have been sequestrated on the same account, shall be restored to them.

VIII. From the same motives which dictated the preceding articles, his Majesty the king of the Two Sicilies engages to cause all proper search to be made for discovering, by legal means, and for giving up to the rigour of the laws, the persons who stole, in 1795, the papers belonging to the late minister of the French Republic.

IX. The ambassadors or ministers of the two contracting powers, shall enjoy in their respective States, the same prerogatives and precedence which they enjoyed before the wars, excepting those which were allowed them as family ambassadors.

X. Every French citizen, and all persons belonging to the household of the ambassador or minister, or to that of the consuls and other authorized and acknowledged agents of the French Republic, shall enjoy in the States of his Majesty the king of the Two Sicilies, the same freedom of religious worship as is enjoyed by the individuals of those nations, not Catholics, which are the most favoured in that respect.

XI. There shall be negotiated and concluded without delay, a treaty of commerce between the two powers, founded on the basis of mutual utility, and such as shall ensure to the French nation advantages equal to those which are en-

joyed in the kingdom of the two Sicilies by the most favoured nations. Until the completion of this treaty, the commercial and consular relations shall be reciprocally re-established on the same footing as before the war.

XII. In conformity with the sixth article of the treaty concluded at the Hague on the 27th Floreal, in the third year of the Republic, (16th of May, 1795, old style) the same peace, friendship, and good understanding that are stipulated in the present treaty, between the French Republic and his Majesty the king of the Two Sicilies, shall subsist between his Majesty and the Batavian Republic.

XIII. The present treaty shall be ratified, and the ratifications exchanged, within forty days from the date thereof.

Done at Paris 19th Vendemiaire, in the 5th year of the French Republic, one and indivisible, corresponding with the 10th of October, 1796, (old style.)

(Signed)

CHARLES DELACROIX.

The Prince of BELMONTE PIGNATELLI.

LORD MALMESBURY.

TRANSLATION OF THE CREDENTIALS GIVEN TO LORD MALMESBURY.

(The original are in Latin,)

“ GEORGE REX.

“ GEORGE, by the grace of God, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, defender of the faith, &c. to all to whom these presents shall come, greeting.—Seeing that the flame of war has for a long time raged in different parts of the globe; deeply occupied with the project of terminating regularly so many quarrels and dissensions, of restoring and consolidating the public tranquillity; resolved for this purpose to chuse a man capable of a negotiation of this importance, and to invest him with full authority to complete so great a work, be it known, that the fidelity, talents, genius, perspicuity, and experience of our faithful and dear counsellor JAMES BARON MALMESBURY, knight of the most honourable order of the Bath, inspiring us with full confidence, we have named him, and he is appointed and constituted our true, certain, and accredited Commissary and Plenipotentiary, giving and conceding him in all respects, full and intire power, faculty and authority; charging him besides with our general and special orders to confer on our part, and in our name with the minister or ministers, commissioners, and plenipotentiaries of the French republick, sufficiently invested with equal authority, as well as
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with the minister, commissioners, or plenipotentiaries of the other Princes and States who may take part in the present negociation, also invested with the same authority; to treat either separately or together; to confer upon the means of establishing a solid and durable peace, amity, and sincere concord; and to adopt all resolutions and conclusions; to sign for us, and in our name, all the said conventions or conclusions; to make, in consequence, every treaty or treaties, and all other acts, as he shall judge necessary; to deliver and receive mutually, all other objects relative to the fortunate execution of the above-mentioned work; to transact with the same force and the same effect as we should be able to do if we assisted in person; guaranteeing, and on our royal word promising, that all and each of the transactions and conclusions which shall be made and determined by our said plenipotentiary shall be made and agreed upon, ratified, accepted, and adopted with the best faith; that we shall never suffer any one, either in whole or in part, to infringe and act contrary to them; and in order to give to every thing more security and force, we have signed the present with our Royal hand, and affixed to it the Great Seal of Great Britain.

“ Given in our Palace at St. James’s, 13th October, year of
“ Grace 1796, and of our reign the 37th.”

NOTE DELIVERED TO THE MINISTER FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, BY LORD MALMESBURY, ENVOY OF THE BRITISH CABINET.

“ The undersigned has not failed to transmit to his court the answer of the Executive Directory to the propositions which he was charged to make, and which were intended to serve as overtures to a negociation of peace.

“ With respect to the injurious and offensive insinuations contained in that answer, and which are only fit to throw new obstacles in the way of that reconciliation which the French government professes to desire, the King has thought it far beneath his dignity to allow any reply whatever to be returned on his part. The progress and result of the negociation will no doubt evince the principles on which it shall have been conducted on either side; and it is neither by reproaches, as disgusting as they are without foundation, nor by reciprocal insults, that a sincere intention is shewn to further the work of peace.

“ The undersigned proceeds therefore to the first object of discussion set forth in the answer of the Executive Directory, viz. that of a separate negociation, to which it has, without the least foundation, supposed that the undersigned was authorized to accede. His credentials and powers, drawn up in the usual form, fully authorize him to negotiate and conclude a peace; but they prescribe
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neither

neither the form and nature, nor the terms of the future treaty. On these points he must, pursuant to the custom long established, and acknowledged, conform himself to the instructions received from his court, and he has consequently not failed to inform the minister for the department of foreign affairs, in their very first conference, that the King his master, had expressly enjoined him not to listen to any proposal tending to separate the interests of his Majesty from those of his allies.

“ A negotiation which embraces the interests and pretensions of all the powers who make a common cause with the King in this present war, is therefore the only one which can take place. In the course of such a negotiation, the intervention, or at least the participation of these powers, will no doubt become absolutely necessary; and his Majesty hopes to find at all times the same disposition to treat on a just and equitable basis, of which his Majesty the Emperor and King gave the French government so striking a proof at the very moment of the opening of this campaign.

“ But to wait for a formal and definitive authority on the part of the King's allies, before Great Britain and France should begin to discuss, even provisionally, the principles of the negotiation, would cause, it appears, a very useless delay. A course widely different has been pursued by the two powers on all former occasions of the same nature, and his Majesty is of opinion, that the best pledge which at this moment they can give to all Europe of their mutual desire to put a period as soon as possible to the calamities of war, would be to settle without delay a basis of combined negotiation, and to invite their allies to participate in it, in the best manner calculated to accelerate a general peace.

“ It was with this view, that the undersigned had it in command to propose, at the very commencement of this negotiation, a principle, which his Majesty's generosity and good faith could alone dictate to him, viz. to indemnify France, by proportionate restitutions for such arrangements as she will consent to, in order to satisfy the just claims of the Allies and the King, and to preserve the political balance of Europe. The Executive Directory has not explained itself in a precise manner either on the approbation of this principle, nor on the alterations and mortifications which it may desire; nor has it proposed any other principle tending to the same end. The undersigned is, therefore, ordered to resume this subject, and to demand on this head an open and precise declaration, in order to shorten the delay, which must otherwise result from the difficulties raised by the Directory with respect to the form of his powers. He is authorised to add to this demand the express declaration, that whilst his Majesty shall acquaint his August Allies with all his successive steps relative to the object of the present negotiation, and fulfil towards those Sovereigns in the most efficacious manner every duty of a good and faithful Ally
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he will at the same time neglect nothing on his part, both to dispose them to concur in this negociation, by all such means as are most fitted to accelerate its progress and ensure its success, and to preserve them in dispositions favourable to his wish for the return of a general peace, on just, permanent, and honourable conditions.

(Signed)

MALMESBURY."

Paris, Nov. 12, 1796.

ANSWER OF THE MINISTER FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO THE NOTE OF LORD MALMESBURY.

"The undersigned is charged by the Executive Directory to invite you to point out distinctly, and, as soon as possible, the objects of reciprocal compensation which you have to propose.

"He has also in command to ask you, where is *the disposition to treat on a just and equitable basis, of which his Majesty the Emperor and King has given the French Government so striking a proof at the very moment of the opening of this campaign.* The Executive Directory is not acquainted with it. It was the Emperor and King who broke the armistice,

(Signed)

"CH. DELACROIX.

"Paris, the 22d Brumaire (12th November)
5th year of the French Republic, one and
Indivisible."

NOTE ADDRESSED BY LORD MALMESBURY TO THE MINISTER FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

"The undersigned does not hesitate a moment to answer the two questions which you are charged to propose to him on the part of the Executive Directory.

"The Memorial presented this morning by the undersigned, proposes in express terms, on the part of his Majesty, the King of Great Britain, to compensate, by proportionate restitutions, the arrangements which France will have to agree to in order to satisfy the just claims of the Allies of the King, and to preserve the political balance of Europe.

"Before this principle is formally approved of, or another proposed on the part of the Executive Directory, which may equally well serve as a basis of the negociation for a general peace, the undersigned cannot be authorized to point out the objects of reciprocal restitution.

"As to the proof of the pacific dispositions which his Majesty the Emperor and King testified towards the French Government at the opening of the campaign, the undersigned confines himself to repeat the following passage from the note of Baron Degelmann, of the 4th of last June.

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‘ The warlike operations shall by no means prevent his Imperial Majesty from being constantly disposed to concur, according to any form of negotiation which may be adopted by the Belligerent Powers, in the discussion of such means as may be proper to put a period to the further effusion of human blood.’

“ This note was presented after the armistice had been broken off.

(Signed)

MALMESBURY.”

“ Paris, the 12th Nov. 1796.

ANSWER OF THE MINISTER FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO THE PRECEDING NOTE.

“ The undersigned is charged by the Executive Directory to declare to you, in answer to your second note of yesterday, that he has nothing to add to the answer which has been addressed to you. He is further charged to ask of you, whether on every official communication between you and him, it will be necessary for you to dispatch a courier for the purpose of receiving special instructions ?”

(Signed)

“ CH. LACROIX.”

LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE MINISTER FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, BY LORD MALMESBURY, ENVOY OF THE BRITISH CABINET.

“ The Minister Plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty requests the Minister for the Department of Foreign Affairs to inform him, whether he ought to consider the official note, which he received from him last night, as the answer to that which Lord Malmesbury delivered yesterday morning, by order of his Court, to the Minister of the Department of Foreign affairs. He desires this explanation that he may not retard the departure of his courier to no purpose.

(Signed)

“ MALMESBUZY.”

“ Paris, the 13th of Nov. 1796.

ANSWER OF THE MINISTER FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TO THE PRECEDING LETTER FROM LORD MALMESBURY.

“ The undersigned Minister for the Department of Foreign Affairs declares to Lord Malmesbury, Plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty, that he is to consider the official note presented to him yesterday, as the answer to that which Lord Malmesbury delivered to him on the morning of the same day.

(Signed)

“ LECROIX.”

“ The 23 Brumaire, 5th year (13th Nov.)

SECOND LETTER FROM LORD MALMESBURY TO THE MINISTER
FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

“ Lord Malmesbury has just received the answer of the Minister for the Department of Foreign Affairs, wherein he declares, that the official note transmitted to him yesterday is to be considered as the answer to that which Lord Malmesbury delivered to him on the morning of the same day.

“ Lord Malmesbury will this day transmit it to his Court.

“ Paris, the 13th Nov. 1796.

B U D G E T.

The RESOLUTIONS moved by the Chancellor of the Exchequer after opening the BUDGET.

December 7, 1796.

Resolved,

THAT it is the opinion of this committee, that, towards the raising the supply granted to his Majesty, the sum of eighteen millions be raised by annuities.

That every contributor to the said sum of eighteen millions shall, for every one hundred pounds contributed and paid, be intitled to the principal sum of 112l. 10s. in annuities, after the rate of 5l. *per centum per annum*, to commence from the 10th day of October 1796, and to be irredeemable, unless with the consent of the proprietors thereof, until the expiration of three years from the period at which the existing annuities, after the rate of 5 *per centum per annum*, shall be redeemed and paid off, or the interest payable thereon reduced.

That every proprietor of the said annuities shall, at his desire, on three months notice, be entitled, at any period of time not less than two years after the end of the war, and ratification of the definitive treaty of peace thereupon, to have the said annuities redeemed, either by the payment of 100l. for every 100l. of such annuities, or of 133l. 6s. 8d. capital in the 3l. *per cent.* consolidated annuities, at the option of such proprietor.

That the said annuities, after the rate of 3l. *per centum per annum*, and the said annuities, after the rate of 3l. *per centum per annum*, to which the said contributor may respectively become entitled, shall, as the same arise, be charged and chargeable upon, and payable out of, the consolidated fund, and shall be payable and transferable at the bank of England, and shall be paid half yearly on the 5th day of April and the 10th day of October, in every year.

That every contributor shall, on or before the 13th day of January 1797, make a deposit of 10l. *per centum* on such sum as he or she shall have subscribed towards raising the said sum of eighteen millions, with the cashier or cashiers of the governor and company of the bank of England, as a security for making the future payments, on or before the days and times hereinafter mentioned, that is to say,

10l. *per centum* on or before the 17th day of March next.

10l. *per centum* on or before the 21st day of April next.

10l. *per centum* on or before the 2d day of June next.

15l. *per centum* on or before the 21st day of July next.

15l. *per centum* on or before the 25th day of August next.

15l. *per centum* on or before the 28th day of September next; and

15l.

15*l. per centum* on or before the 31st day of October next.

That all the monies so to be received by the cashier or cashiers of the governor and company of the Bank of England, shall be paid into the receipt of the Exchequer, to be applied, from time to time, to such services as shall then have been voted by this House in this session of parliament.

That no receipt, for the monies so to be contributed, shall be issued to any contributor until after the 17th day of March 1797, or until such contributor shall have contributed and paid the sum of 20*l. per centum* on the sum by him subscribed.

That every contributor who shall pay in the whole of his or her contribution money, towards the said sum of eighteen millions, or any instalment thereof, before the 13th day of January 1797, shall be allowed an interest, by way of discount, after the rate of 5*l. per centum per annum* on the sum so advanced, to be computed from the day of paying the same to the said 13th day of January 1797.

That every contributor who shall pay in the sum of 20*l. per centum* on the sum by him subscribed between the 13th day of January and the 17th day of March 1797, shall be allowed an interest, by way of discount, after the rate of 5*l. per centum per annum* on one half of the sum so paid in, to be computed from the day of paying the same, to the 17th day of March 1797.

And that every contributor who shall pay in the whole of his or her contribution money, towards the said sum of eighteen millions, at any time between the 17th day of March and the 28th day of September 1797, shall be allowed an interest, by way of discount, after the rate of 3*l. per centum per annum*, on the sum so advanced, for completing his or her contribution respectively, to be computed from the day of completing the same to the 31st day of October 1797.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional duty of customs, of two shillings and sixpence be charged upon every one hundred weight of brown and Muscovado sugar, of the British plantations, which shall be imported into this kingdom after the 7th of December 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional duty of customs, of two shillings and sixpence, be charged upon every one hundred weight of sugar which may have been, or shall be, imported into this kingdom by the East India Company, and which shall be sold at the sales of the said company after the 7th day of December 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional duty of customs, of five shillings, be charged upon every one hundred weight of any other sugar which shall be imported into this kingdom after the 7th day of December 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional duty of the customs, of three shillings and seven pence, be charged upon every one thousand bricks imported into this kingdom.

That,

That, towards raising a supply granted to his Majesty, a duty of customs, of one penny, be charged upon every pound weight of pepper imported by the East India Company, which shall be taken out of, or delivered from, any warehouse, for the purpose of exportation, after the 7th day of December 1796.

That, towards raising a supply granted to his Majesty, an additional duty of ten pounds *per centum* be charged upon the produce and amount of the duties of customs, now due, and payable to his Majesty on pepper, which shall be delivered out of any warehouse to be used and consumed in this kingdom after the 7th day of December 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional duty of ten pounds *per centum* be charged upon the produce and amount of the duties of customs, now due and payable to his Majesty, on the following articles imported into this kingdom, that is to say, brimstone, hemp, iron in bars or unwrought, ordinary oil of olives, and staves, imported from any part of Europe.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional duty of five pounds *per centum* be charged upon the produce and amount of the several duties of customs, now due, and payable to his Majesty on goods, wares, and merchandize, imported into, exported from, or brought or carried coastwise within this kingdom, except wine, sugar, coals brought or carried coastwise within this kingdom, bricks, brimstone, hemp, iron in bars or unwrought, ordinary oil of olives, pepper, staves imported from any part of Europe, and prize goods, on being warehoused.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, so much of the drawback of the duties of customs, now allowed on the exportation of coffee and cocoa nuts of the produce of any British colony or plantation, as exceeds the drawback of the duties of customs now allowed on the exportation of any other sort of coffee or cocoa nuts, shall be repealed, and no longer paid or allowed.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of two pence half-penny be charged upon every twenty shillings of the purchase money arising, or payable, by virtue of any sale at auction in Great Britain, of any interest in possession or reversion in any freehold, copyhold, or leasehold, lands, tenements, houses, or hereditaments, and of any annuities, or sums of money charged thereon, and of any utensils in husbandry and farming stocks, ships and vessels, and of any reversionary interest in the public funds, and of any plate or jewels.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of three pence be charged upon every twenty shillings of the purchase money arising, or payable, by virtue of any sale at auction in Great Britain of furniture, fixtures, pictures, books, horses, and carriages, and all other goods and chattles whatsoever.

That,

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of one shilling be charged for every thousand of bricks which shall be made in Great Britain, and so in proportion for any greater or less quantity.

That a drawback of the said duty be allowed on all bricks which shall be made in Great Britain, and exported as merchandize to foreign parts.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of nine pence be charged for every pound weight avoirdupoise of cocoa nuts, of the growth or produce of any British colony or plantation in America, imported into Great Britain, and which shall be delivered for home consumption out of the warehouse in which the same shall have been, or shall be, lodged under the care and custody of the proper officers for securing the duties payable thereon, after the 7th day of December 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of two shillings and sixpence be charged for every pound weight avoirdupoise of cocoa nuts, of the growth or produce of any other place, which shall be imported into Great Britain after the 7th day of December 1796, or which shall be delivered out of the warehouse, in which the same shall have been lodged under the care and custody of the proper officers for securing the duties payable thereon, for home consumption, and so in proportion for any greater or less quantity, and for which all the duties payable thereon shall not be paid on before the 7th day of December 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of nine pence be charged for every pound weight avoirdupoise of coffee imported into Great Britain, and which shall be delivered for home consumption out of the warehouse, in which the same shall have been, or shall be, lodged under the care and custody of the proper officers for securing the duties payable thereon after the 7th day of December 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional duty of one penny be laid upon every gallon of fermented wort or wash brewed or made in that part of Great Britain called England, for extracting spirits, for home consumption, from any malt, corn, grain, or tilts, or any mixture with the same, which shall not be actually distilled into spirits or or before the 7th day of December 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional duty of one penny be laid upon every gallon of cyder and perry, or any other wash or liquor brewed or made in that part of Great Britain called England, from any sort or kind of British materials (except such as are before mentioned) or from any mixture therewith, for extracting spirits for home consumption, which shall not be actually distilled into spirits on or before the 7th day of December 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional duty of one penny half-penny be laid upon every gallon of fermented wort or wash brewed or made in that part of Great Britain called England from Melasses or sugar, or any mixture therewith, for extracting spirits for home consumption, which shall not be actually distilled into spirits on or before the 7th day of December 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional duty of two pence be laid upon every gallon of wash brewed or made in that part of Great Britain called England, from foreign refused wine or foreign cyder, or wash prepared from foreign materials, except melasses and sugar, or any mixture therewith, for extracting spirits for home consumption, which shall not be actually distilled into spirits on or before the 7th day of December, 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty, at and after the rate of two shillings and eight pence three farthings, be laid upon every ninety-six gallons of wash, which Sir William Bishop, Argles Bishop, and George Bishop, or the survivor or survivors of them, may produce from a weight of malt or other corn, including the bran thereof and not exceeding one hundred and twelve pounds, which shall not be actually distilled into spirits on or before the 7th day of December, 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of five pence half-penny be charged for every gallon, English wine measure, of spirits, of a strength not exceeding that of one to ten over hydrometer proof, made or manufactured in that part of Great Britain called Scotland, which shall be imported or brought from thence into that part of Great Britain called England, after the 7th day of December, 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty, in proportion to the surplus strength, be charged for every gallon, English wine measure, of such spirits, of a greater strength than that of one to ten over hydrometer proof, and not exceeding three *per centum*. over and above one to ten over hydrometer proof.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of five pence half-penny be charged for every gallon, English wine measure, of spirits, of a strength not exceeding that of one to ten over hydrometer proof, which shall have been imported, or brought, from that part of Great Britain called Scotland, into that part of Great Britain called England, and which, after the 7th day of December, 1796, shall be found in any ship or vessel in which the same shall have been imported, or in any lighter or other vessel after the unshipping, and before the landing thereof, or upon any quay or wharf upon the first landing thereof, and which shall not have been charged with the said additional duty.

That,

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty, in proportion to the surplus strength, be charged for every gallon, English wine measure, of spirits, of a greater strength than that of one to ten over hydrometer proof, and not exceeding three *per centum* over and above one to ten over hydrometer proof, made or manufactured in that part of Great Britain called Scotland, and imported from thence into that part of Great Britain called England.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty, in proportion to the surplus strength, be charged for every gallon, English wine measure, of spirits, of a greater strength than that of one to ten over hydrometer proof, and not exceeding three *per centum* over and above one to ten over hydrometer proof, which shall have been imported from that part of Great Britain called Scotland, into that part of Great Britain called England, and, after the 7th day of December, 1796, shall be found in any ship or vessel in which the same shall have been imported, or in any lighter or other vessel after the unshipping, and before the landing thereof, or upon any quay or wharf upon the first landing thereof, and which shall not have been charged with the said additional duty.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of ten pence be charged for every gallon of single brandy which shall be imported into Great Britain after the 7th day of December, 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of ten pence be charged for every gallon of single brandy which shall have been imported into Great Britain, and which, after the 7th day of December, 1796, shall be found in any ship or vessel in which the same shall have been imported, or in any lighter or other vessel, after the unshipping, and before the landing thereof, or upon any quay or wharf upon the first landing thereof, and which shall not have been charged with the said additional duty.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of one shilling and eight pence be charged for every gallon of brandy above proof, which shall be imported into Great Britain after the 7th day of December, 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of one shilling and eight pence be charged for every gallon of brandy above proof, which shall have been imported into Great Britain, and which, after the 7th day of December, 1796, shall be found in any ship or vessel in which the same shall have been imported, or in any lighter or other vessel after the unshipping, and before the landing thereof, or upon any quay or wharf upon the first landing thereof, and which shall not have been charged with the said additional duty.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of eight pence be charged for every gallon of rum, spirits, or aqua vitæ, of the produce of the British colonies

or

or plantations, which shall be imported into Great Britain after the 7th day of December, 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of eight pence be charged for every gallon of rum, spirits, or aqua vitæ, of the produce of the British colonies or plantations, which shall have been imported into Great Britain, and which, after the 7th day of December, 1796, shall be found in any ship or vessel in which the same shall have been imported, or in any lighter or other vessel after the unshipping and before the landing thereof, or upon any quay or wharf, upon the first landing thereof, and which shall not have been charged with the said additional duty.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of one shilling and four pence be charged for every gallon of rum, spirits, or aqua vitæ above proof, of the produce of the British colonies or plantations, which shall be imported into Great Britain after the 7th day of December, 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of one shilling and four pence be charged for every gallon of rum, spirits, or aqua vitæ above proof, of the produce of the British colonies or plantations, which shall have been imported into Great Britain, and which, after the 7th day of December, 1796, shall be found in any ship or vessel in which the same shall have been imported, or in any lighter or other vessel, after the unshipping, and before the landing thereof, or upon any quay or wharf, upon the first landing thereof, and which shall not have been charged with the said additional duty.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of eight pence be charged upon every gallon of rum or spirits, of the produce of the British plantations, which, on the 7th day of December, 1796, shall be in any warehouse in which the same shall have been put, subject and according to the rules, regulations, restrictions, and provisions, contained and provided in an act of parliament, made in the 15th year of the reign of his late Majesty King George the Second, concerning the landing of rum or spirits of the British sugar plantations before payment of the duties of excise, and lodging the same in warehouses, and which shall, from and after the said 7th day of December, be delivered out of any such Warehouse or Warehouses, respectively for home consumption, except such rum or spirits for which all the duties, due and payable thereon, shall have been paid on or before the said 7th day of December, 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of one shilling and four pence be charged upon every gallon of rum or spirits above proof, of the produce of the British plantations, which, on the said 7th day of December, 1796, shall be in any such warehouse, and which shall, from and after the said 7th day of December, 1796, be delivered out of any such warehouse for home consumption, except such rum or spirits for which

which all the duties payable thereon shall have been paid on or before the 7th day of December, 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of ten pence be laid upon every gallon of single spirits, or aqua vitæ (other than such brandy, rum, or spirits, as aforesaid) which shall be imported into Great Britain after the 7th day of December, 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of ten pence be charged for every gallon of single spirits, or aqua vitæ (other than such brandy, rum, or spirits, as aforesaid), which shall have been imported into Great Britain, and which, after the 7th day of December 1796, shall be found in any ship or vessel in which the same shall have been imported, or in any lighter or other vessel after the unshipping, and before the landing thereof, or upon any quay or wharf upon the first landing thereof, and which shall not have been charged with the said additional duty.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of one shilling and eight pence be laid upon every gallon of spirits, or aqua vitæ (other than such brandy, rum, or spirits as aforesaid) above proof, which shall be imported into Great Britain after the 7th day of December 1796.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of one shilling and eight pence be charged for every gallon of spirits, or aqua vitæ (other than such brandy, rum, or spirits as aforesaid) above proof, which shall have been imported into Great Britain, and which, after the 7th day of December 1796, shall be found in any ship or vessel in which the same shall have been imported, or in any lighter or other vessel after the unshipping, and before the landing thereof, or upon any quay or wharf upon the first landing thereof, and which shall not have been charged with the said additional duty.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional excise duty of ten pounds *per centum* be laid upon all tea which shall be sold at the sales of the United Company of Merchants of England, trading to the East Indies, for two shillings *per* pound weight or upwards, after the 7th day of December 1796, (or which, having been so sold, shall be found in any warehouse belonging to the said United Company after the said 7th day of December 1766) to be computed upon the gross prices at which such tea shall be, or shall have been, sold.

That a drawback of the duty be granted upon the exportation of all tea sold by the said United Company, and exported to any place where a drawback of the duty on tea is now allowed by law.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional duty of thirty-six pounds *per* gallon be charged upon the contents of every still used in distilling worts, wash, or low wines,

wines, from malt, corn, grain, or British materials, in the low lands of that part of Great Britain called Scotland.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional annual duty of sixty pounds *per* galloa be charged upon the contents of every still used in distilling worts, wash, or low wines, from melasses or sugar in that part of Great Britain called Scotland.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional annual duty of seventy-two pounds *per* gallon be charged upon the contents of every still used in distilling worts, wash, or low wines, from foreign refused wine, or foreign materials (except melasses or sugar) in that part of Great Britain called Scotland.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional annual duty of thirty-six pounds *per* gallon be charged upon the contents of every still used in distilling worts, wash, or low wines, from malt, corn, grain, or British materials, in that part of Great Britain called England, to be exported to that part of Great Britain called Scotland.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional annual duty of thirty-six pounds *per* gallon be charged upon the contents of every still used in rectifying or compounding spirits in that part of Great Britain called England, to be exported to that part of Great Britain called Scotland.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional annual duty of sixty pounds *per* gallon be charged upon the contents of every still used in distilling worts, wash, or low wines, from melasses or sugar, in that part of Great Britain called England, to be exported to that part of Great Britain called Scotland.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional annual duty of seventy two pounds *per* gallon be charged upon the contents of every still used in distilling worts, wash, or low wines, from foreign materials (except melasses or sugar) in that part of Great Britain called England, to be exported to that part of Great Britain called Scotland.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional annual duty of four pounds *per* gallon be charged upon the contents of every still used for distilling worts, wash, or low wines, in the highlands of that part of Great Britain called Scotland.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, an additional annual duty of thirty-six pounds *per* gallon be charged upon the contents of all stills used for rectifying or compounding spirits, in that part of Great Britain called Scotland.

That the several rates of postage, now payable for the conveyance of letters and packets by the post, within England, Wales, and the town of Berwick upon Tweed, do cease and determine.

That, towards raising the supply granted for his Majesty, there be charged for the the port or conveyance of every single letter conveyed or carried by the post within England, Wales, and the

town

town of Berwick upon Tweed, for any distance not exceeding fifteen measured miles from the office where such letter may be put in, to the office where such letter shall be delivered, the sum of three pence, for every double letter sixpence, for every treble letter nine pence, and for every ounce in weight one shilling, and so in proportion for every other letter or packet of greater weight than one ounce.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, there be charged for the port and conveyance of every single letter, conveyed or carried by the post within England, Wales, and the town of Berwick upon Tweed, for any distance above fifteen miles, and not exceeding thirty miles, from the office where such letter may be put in, to the office where such letter shall be delivered, the sum of four pence, for every double letter eight pence, for every treble letter one shilling, and for every ounce in weight one shilling and four pence, and so in proportion for every other letter or packet of greater weight than an ounce.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, there be charged for the port and conveyance of every single letter, conveyed and carried by the post within England, Wales, and the town of Berwick upon Tweed, for any distance above thirty miles, and not exceeding sixty miles, from the office where such letter may be put in, to the office where such letter shall be delivered, the sum of five pence, for every double letter ten pence, for every treble letter one shilling and three pence, and for every ounce in weight one shilling and eight pence, and so in proportion for every other letter or packet of greater weight than an ounce.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, there be charged for the port and conveyance of every single letter conveyed or carried by the post within England, Wales, and the town of Berwick upon Tweed, for any distance above sixty miles, and not exceeding one hundred miles, from the office where such letter may be put in, to the office where such letter shall be delivered, the sum of six-pence, for every double letter one shilling, for every treble letter one shilling and six-pence, and every ounce in weight two shillings, and so in proportion for every other letter or packet of greater weight than an ounce.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, there be charged for the port and conveyance of every single letter conveyed or carried by the post, within England, Wales, and the town of Berwick upon Tweed, for any distance above one hundred miles and not exceeding one hundred and fifty miles, from the office where such letter may be put in, to such office where such letter shall be delivered, the sum of seven pence, for every double letter one shilling and two pence, for every treble letter one shilling and nine pence, and for every ounce in weight two shillings and four pence, and so in proportion for every other letter or packet of greater weight than an ounce.

That,

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, there be charged for the port and conveyance of every single letter conveyed or carried by the post, within England, Wales, and the town of Berwick upon Tweed, for any distance above one hundred and fifty miles from the office where such letter may be put in, to the office where such letter shall be delivered, the sum of eight pence, for every double letter one shilling and four pence, for every treble letter two shillings and for every ounce in weight two shillings and eight pence, and so in proportion for every other letter or packet of greater weight than an ounce.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, there be charged for the port and conveyance of every single letter conveyed or carried by the post within that part of Great Britain called Scotland, in addition to the rates of postage now payable, the sum of one penny, for every double letter two pence, for every treble letter three pence, and for every ounce in weight four pence, and so in proportion for every other letter or packet of greater weight than an ounce.

That, the several rates of postage now payable for the conveyance of letters and packets from and to London, to and from Portugal, and from and to London, to and from the British dominions in America do cease and determine.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, there be charged for the port and conveyance of every single letter passing from any part of the kingdom of Great Britain to Lisbon, or to any other port in the kingdom of Portugal, and from Lisbon, or any such port, into Great Britain, exclusive of the inland rate of postage charged thereon, the sum of one shilling, for every double letter two shillings, for every treble letter three shillings, and for every ounce in weight four shillings, and so in proportion for every other letter or packet of greater weight than an ounce.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, there be charged for the port and conveyance of every single letter passing from any part of the kingdom of Great Britain to any port within the British dominions in America, and from any such port into Great Britain, exclusive of the inland duty of postage charged thereon, the sum of one shilling, for every double two shillings, for every treble letter three shillings, and for every ounce in weight four shillings, and so in proportion for every other letter or packet of greater weight than an ounce.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, there be charged on all letters and packages passing to or from Portugal, from or to Great Britain, and to or from the British dominions in America, from or to Great Britain, the inland rate of postage, according to the distance such letters and packets shall be conveyed within great Britain.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, upon every assessment to be made after the 5th day of April 1797, under, or by virtue of, any act or acts of parliament hereinafter mentioned,

mentioned, that is to say, an act, passed in the twenty-fourth year of the reign of his present Majesty, intituled, "An act for
 "repealing the several duties on tea, and for granting to his
 "Majesty other duties in lieu thereof, and also several duties on
 "inhabited houses, and upon the importation of cocoa nuts and
 "coffee, and for repealing the inland duties of excise thereon,"
 one other act, passed in the last session of parliament, intituled,
 "An act for granting to his Majesty new duties on certain horses
 "not charged with duty by any other act or acts of parliament,
 "and on mules," one other act, passed in the same session of parliament, intituled, "An Act for granting to his Majesty several
 "additional duties on horses, kept for the purpose of riding, or
 "drawing certain carriages therein mentioned," and one other act, passed in the same session, intituled, "An Act for granting
 "to his Majesty certain Duties on Dogs," for, or in respect of, the several rates and duties thereby granted, under the management of the commissioners for the affairs of taxes, an additional rate or duty shall be charged, after the rate of ten pounds for every hundred pounds, of the gross amount thereof in such assessment.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty upon every assessment to be made after the 5th day of April 1797, under, or by virtue of, any act or acts of parliament hereinafter mentioned, that is to say, one act, passed in the twenty-fourth year of the reign of his present Majesty, intituled, "An Act of for granting to his Majesty certain duties on horses,
 "kept for the purpose of riding, and on horses drawing certain
 "carriages, in respect whereof any duty of excise is made payable," and one other act, passed in the twenty-ninth year of
 "the reign of his present Majesty, intituled, "An Act for
 "granting to his Majesty several additional rates and duties upon
 "horses, and carriages with four wheels, and for explaining and
 "amending an act, passed in the twenty-fifth year of his present
 "Majesty, as far as relates to certain carriages with two or three
 "wheels, therein mentioned," for, or in respect of, the several rates and duties on horses kept for the purpose of riding, or for the purpose of drawing any carriage in the said acts respectively mentioned; one other act, passed in the last session of parliament intituled, "An Act for granting to his Majesty new duties on
 "certain horses not charged with duty by any other act or acts of parliament and on mules," one other act, passed in the same session of parliament, intituled, "An act for granting to
 "his Majesty several additional duties on horses, kept for the
 "purpose of riding, or drawing certain carriages therein mentioned," and one other act, passed in the same session of parliament, intituled, "An Act for granting to his Majesty certain
 "duties on Dogs," for, or in respect of, the several rates and duties thereby respectively granted, a further additional rate or duty shall be charged, after the rate of ten pounds for every hundred pounds, of the gross amount thereof in such assessment.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, there be charged, for and upon all goods, wares, merchandize, and things whatever, conveyed upon any river, cut, canal, or other inland navigation in Great Britain, in respect whereof any toll, rate, or duty, shall be collected and received by any person or persons, company or corporation, by virtue of any act or acts of parliament, now in force, or hereafter to be made, a duty equal to one eighth part of such toll, rate, or duty, and in addition to the same, to be paid by the respective persons to whom such toll, rate, or duty, may be respectively payable.

That, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, there be charged for every coach, berlin, landau, chariot, calash, or other carriage with four wheels, and every calash, chaise, chair, or other carriage with two wheels, by what name soever the same now is, or hereafter shall be called or known, to be employed as publick stage coaches, or carriages, for the purpose of conveying passengers for hire, to and from different places in the kingdom of Great Britain, an additional duty of one penny for every mile such carriage shall travel, to be paid by the owner or owners thereof.

That every common carrier, or other person, carrying goods, wares, merchandize, or other things, for hire, by land carriage, from place to place in Great Britain, shall give a receipt for every parcel, or package, delivered to them respectively, to be conveyed by such carriage for hire; and that, upon every receipt, there shall be charged a stamp duty of two pence, to be paid by the person or personages delivering such parcel or packages.

TRASLATION

TRANSLATION

OF THE DECLARATION OF WAR OF THE COURT OF MADRID
AGAINST GREAT BRITAIN.

ONE of the principal motives which determined me to make peace with the French republic, as soon as its government began to take a regular and solid form, was the conduct which England had observed towards me during the whole course of the war, and the just distrust which the experience of her ill-faith ought to occasion on my part for the future. This ill-faith became manifest in the most critical moment of the first campaign, from the manner in which admiral Hood treated my fleet at Toulon, where he attended to nothing but the destruction of what he could not carry away with him ; and from his presently after taking possession of Corsica, which Expedition that Admiral concealed with the greatest care from Don Juan de Langara, when they were together at Toulon.

The English ministry afterwards confirmed the same from their silence in all their negotiations with other powers, especially by the treaty which was signed the 19th November, 1794, with the United States of America, without any respect or consideration for my rights, which were well known to them.

I noticed also that ill-faith in their repugnance to adopt the plans and ideas which might accelerate the conclusion of the war, and in the vague answer Lord Grenville gave to my Ambassador, the Marquis Del Campo, when he applied for succours to continue it.

I was finally confirmed in that opinion by the injustice with which they appropriated to themselves the valuable cargo of the Spanish re-captured ship Saint Jago, or Achilles, which they ought to have restored according to the agreement between my first Secretary of State and of the Despacho, the Prince de la Paz, and Lord St. Helens, his Britannick Majesty's Ambassador ; and by the detention of the naval stores coming for the use of my arsenals on board Dutch vessels, the forwarding of which was delayed under fresh pretexts and difficulties.

Lastly, I had no doubt left of the ill-faith in the conduct of England, from the frequent arrival of English vessels on the coast of Peru and Chili, to carry on a contraband trade, and reconnoitre those coasts, under the pretext of the whale fishery, a privilege they claimed by the Nootka Convention.

Such were the proceedings of the English ministry, to prove the Friendship, good understanding, and strict confidence, which they had offered to observe with Spain in all the operations of the war, by virtue of the Convention of the 25th May, 1793.

Since

Since peace was concluded with the French Republick, I have not only had the best grounded motives to suppose England harboured an intention to attack my American possessions; but I have received direct injuries, which have confirmed to me the resolution formed by that ministry, to oblige me to adopt a part contrary to the good of humanity, torn to pieces by the bloody war which is annihilating Europe, and contrary to the sincere desire I have manifested, on repeated occasions, to put an end to it by means of peace, proposing my good offices to accelerate its conclusion.

England has, in fact, shewn openly her views against my dominions, by the great expeditions and armaments sent to the West Indies, destined in part against Saint Domingo, in order to impede its delivery to France, as is evident from the proclamations of the English generals in that island; by the establishment of trading companies in North America, on the banks of the river Misouri, with an intention to penetrate through those regions to the South Sea; and lastly, by the conquest she has just made on the continent of South America, of the colony and river of Demerari, belonging to the Dutch, which advantageous situation puts her in the way to occupy other important points.

But her views have been still more hostilely and more clearly shewn by her repeated insults to my flag, and by the violence committed in the Mediterranean, by her ships of war, in taking out of different Spanish vessels the recruits for my armies, who were coming from Genoa to Barcelona; by the acts of piracy and vexation, by which the Corsican privateers, protected by the English government in the island, destroy the Spanish trade in the Mediterranean, even within the bays of the coast of Cataluna; and by the detention of several Spanish vessels, laden with Spanish property, which have been carried into the English ports under frivolous pretexts; especially by the embargo of the rich cargo of the Spanish ship *Minerva*, executed with outrage to the Spanish flag, and still detained in spite of the most authentic documents, shewing the said cargo to be Spanish property, having been presented in the proper court.

The offence has not been less grievous which has been offered to the character of my Ambassador Don Simon de las Casas, by one of the courts of law in London, which ordered him to be arrested on the ground of a demand, made by a master of a vessel, for a very small sum of money.

And, lastly, it has been no longer possible to tolerate the enormous violations of the Spanish territory, on the coasts of Alicant and Galicia, committed by the brigs of the English Navy, the *Cameleon* and *Kangaroo*; and that which took place at the island of Trinidad was still more scandalous and insolent, when Capt. Vaughan, commander of the *Alarm* frigate, landed, with colours flying and drums beating, at the head of his whole ship's company armed, to attack the French, and revenge injuries which he

said

said he had received, thus disturbing, by a proceeding so offensive to my sovereignty, the tranquillity of the inhabitants of that island.

By such reiterated and unheard-of insults, that ambitious nation has repeated to the world the examples of her knowing no other law than that of the aggrandizement of her trade, by means of an universal despotism by sea. She has gone beyond the bounds of my moderation and forbearance, and obliges me, in order to support the honour of my crown, and to attend to the protection I owe my subjects, to declare war against the King of England, his kingdoms, and subjects, and to command that such orders be sent to all parts of my dominions, as may be best calculated for the defence of my beloved subjects, and for the annoyance of the enemy.

ANSWER

TO THE DECLARATION OF WAR OF THE COURT OF MADRID AGAINST GREAT BRITAIN.

The open and undisguised aggressions of Spain, the violences committed against the persons and properties of his Majesty's subjects, and the unprovoked Declaration of War on the part of that power, have at length obliged his Majesty to take the necessary measures for repelling force by force, and for vindicating the dignity of his crown, and the rights and interests of his people.

At the moment of adopting these measures, his Majesty thinks it due to himself to remove every shade of doubt which could be thrown on the indisputable justice of his cause; and it will be easily proved, from the very reasons adduced by the court of Madrid in support of its Declaration of War, that all the calamities which may ensue from it are solely to be attributed to the conduct of his enemies.

A simple reference to that declaration, and a bare enumeration of the vague and frivolous charges which it contains, would indeed be sufficient to satisfy all reasonable and impartial minds, that no part of the conduct of Great Britain towards Spain has afforded the smallest ground of complaint, much less any motive sufficiently

sufficiently powerful for adding to the present calamities of Europe, all the evils of a new and complicated war.

The only difficulty of a more detailed reply arises not from the strength and importance of the complaints alledged, but from their weakness and futility—from the confused and untelligible shape in which they are brought forward, and from the impossibility of referring them to any established principle of rule or justice, to any usual form or topic of complaint between independent governments, or to any of those motives which can alone create the painful duty of an appeal to arms.

The acts of hostility attributed to his Majesty in the Manifesto of Spain, consist either of matters perfectly innocent and indifferent in their nature, or of imputed opinions and intentions of which no proof is adduced, nor any effect alledged, or lastly, of complaints of the misconduct of unauthorised individuals; respecting all which his Majesty has never failed to institute enquiry, where enquiry was necessary, and to cause justice to be done in the regular course of judicial proceedings. The very nature of such complaints affords a sufficient answer to the conclusion attempted to be drawn from them by Spain; and his Majesty might have been well justified in declining all further discussion on points, on which it was manifest that no just motive of hostility could be grounded.

Such however was not his conduct.—Anxious to avert from both kingdoms the calamities of war, he has repeatedly, but in vain, proposed to adjust, by amicable discussion, all points of difference which could subsist between the governments of two nations, whose real interests were the same, and who had an equal concern in opposing the progress of a common enemy.

This discussion having always been studiously avoided by the court of Madrid, it now remains only for his Majesty to vindicate, in this publick manner, his own cause, and to prove the futility of those pretensions by which that court now seeks to colour its aggression.

The first point brought forward to support an accusation of ill faith,—is the conduct of the King's admiral at Toulon; who is charged with having destroyed those ships and naval stores of the enemy which he could not carry away with him;—and with having afterwards undertaken an expedition to Corsica without the knowledge or participation of the Spanish admiral. To an accusation of such a nature, alledged as a ground for war between two great nation, it can hardly be expected that a serious answer should be given. It is, perhaps, the first time that it has been imputed as a crime to one of the commanding officers of two powers acting in alliance, and making common cause in war, that he did more than his proportion of mischief to the common enemy. And if it be really true that such sentiment was entertained at Madrid, certainly no other justification can be necessary
for

for not inviting the officers of that court to join in subsequent expeditions against the same enemy : at all events, it cannot be pretended that a co-operation between two allies (however cordial and sincere) in any one particular enterprize, could afterwards restrain either of them from undertaking separately any other, to which his own force appeared in itself to be adequate.

The second instance of ill-faith attributed to his Majesty, is the conclusion of a treaty of amity and commerce with the United State of America ;—a power with whom both Great Britain and Spain were at peace ; with whom the King, as well as his Catholic Majesty, was perfectly free to contract any such engagements ; and with whom the court of Madrid has actually concluded a similar treaty, with this difference only, that the stipulations of the British treaty can give no ground of offence or injury to any other power, while the Spanish treaty contains an article (that respecting the navigation of the Mississippi) which, if it could have had any force or effect at all, would be on the part of Spain a direct breach of treaty with Great Britain, and a gross violation of the important and unquestionable rights of his Majesty and his people.

The same ill-faith is said to have been manifested in the unwillingness shewn by the British government to adopt the plans proposed by Spain for hastening the conclusion of the war with France, (but what these plans were, is not stated), and also in omitting to comply with an application made by Spain for pecuniary succours as necessary to enable her to act against the common enemy. The failure of such an application cannot certainly be matter of surprize to any one who considers the situation and conduct of Spain during the war. It can hardly be alledged even as an excuse for the precipitate peace concluded by Spain, without the knowledge of her allies ; but it is difficult to conceive how such a refusal can be made a ground of hostility towards Great Britain, or with what consistency the inability of Spain to prosecute the former contest without pecuniary aid from its ally, can have become a motive of engaging gratuitously in all the expences and difficulties of a new war, against that very power.

With regard to the condemnation of the *St. Jago*, (a prize taken from the enemy by his Majesty's naval forces), his Majesty has only to reply to the injurious assertions on that subject in the Spanish manifesto, that the claims of all the parties in that cause were publicly heard and decided according to the known law of nations, and before the only competent tribunal ; one, whose impartiality is above all suspicion.

The conduct of his Majesty respecting the naval stores, which were claimed by Spain though found on board Dutch vessels, has been in like manner exempt from all blame, nor was any unnecessary delay interposed respecting those cargoes till the equivocal conduct of Spain, and the strong and just suspicion of her hostile dispositions made it impossible for his Majesty to consent

to

to supply her from the ports of his dominions with the means of acting against himself.

The next charge relates to the alledged misconduct of some merchant ships in landing their crews on the coasts of Chili and Peru, with the views of carrying on there an illicit commerce, and of reconnoitring the country. On this it is to be observed, that these views are not attempted to be proved by any fact whatever; that if any act was in truth committed by individuals in those distant territories against the laws of the government established there, those laws might have been enforced upon the spot, and that the court of London has always been open to receive and redress all complaints of that nature. But this was assigned in the manifesto as a mere cover and pretext for fraud, namely, the exercise of the whale fishery by the English in those parts, is not, as is there asserted, a right which the English "claim under "the convention of Nootka." It is one, which was not then for the first time established, but solemnly recognized by the court of Madrid, as having always belonged to Great Britain, and the full and undisturbed exercise of which was guaranteed to his Majesty's subjects in terms so express as to admit of no doubt, and in a transaction so recent that ignorance of it cannot be pretended.

Such it seems were the offences of the British government, and such the jealousies and apprehensions of Spain, during the time when the courts of London and Madrid were united in the bonds of alliance, and engaged in a common cause; and it is on motives as frivolous as these, that the court of Madrid began to project an offensive alliance with the King's enemies; a design which it now professes to have entertained from the moment when it separated itself from the common cause, but which was long after that period disguised under the most positive and explicit assurances of neutrality.

It is insinuated, that the good offices of his Catholic Majesty for bringing about a general pacification, had been tendered to Great Britain, and had been refused. What degree of impartiality could have been expected from such a mediation, the dispositions which Spain now avows herself to have entertained at that period sufficiently shew; his Majesty exercised his undoubted right of judging for himself and for his people, how far a negotiation commenced under such auspices was likely to contribute to the honour and interests of his dominions; and he now finds the propriety of his decision confirmed beyond a doubt, by the conduct and avowals of Spain.

It is next stated, that in the prosecution of the War, in which Great Britain is engaged, her views seem uniformly to have been directed to the annoyance of the Spanish possessions in America. In support of this accusation, are adduced an expedition directed against Saint Domingo, the conquest of the Dutch colony of Demerary, and the supposed establishment of British commercial companies

companies on the banks of the Missouri, formed with a view of penetrating to the South Sea.

This latter point is one to which it is impossible to make a specific answer, because the British Government has no knowledge of any fact to which it can refer. Within the Spanish territory, the Spanish government certainly possesses both the right and the power to prevent individuals from trading :—within the American territory, his Majesty's subjects have by treaty a right to settle and to trade. And they have also an express right freely to navigate the Mississippi, by which the territories of Spain and the United States are divided from each other. Unless therefore it can be shewn that the British government has authorized any settlement on the Spanish territory, this complaint can afford no pretence for hostility against his Majesty.

With regard to the expedition against Saint Domingo, and to the conquest of Demerary, it is impossible to refrain from remarking, that however highly the rights of neutral nations ought to be respected, and whatever delicacy his Majesty might be disposed to feel towards those of a power so lately his ally, and not yet become his enemy,—it is a new and hitherto unheard-of claim of neutrality, which is to be circumscribed by no bounds either of time or place, which extends equally beyond the date and beyond the limits of possession, and is to attach not to the territories of a neutral power itself, but to whatever may once have belonged to it, and to whatever may be situated in its neighbourhood, although in the possession of an actual enemy.

The subject, however, of Saint Domingo, deserves to be more particularly adverted to, because the attempt on the part of Spain to cede a part of that island to France, is a breach of that solemn treaty under which alone the crown of Spain holds any part of its American possessions. The conclusion of such an article, without the knowledge of an ally so deeply concerned as Great Britain in that stipulation, both in right and interest, was therefore an act, such as would have justified any measures to which the court of London could have recourse; yet so earnest was the King's desire to maintain peace with Spain, that he repeatedly endeavoured to fix, by amicable discussion with that court, the period when the right of Spain to the territory so ceded was to cease, in order that any operation, which it might become expedient for his troops to undertake there, might be directed against the French alone: and although no explanation could ever be obtained from the court of Madrid on this subject, his commanders on the spot were restrained from acting, and did not act against the Spanish part of the island, till the cession actually took place, by which it became, as far as the act of Spain could make it, a part of the territories of France.

To the accusations which make up the greater part of the remainder of the manifesto, respecting the detention or capture of merchant ships, or the violations of territory there mentioned, it is
sufficient

sufficient to reply, that in every case of such a nature which has been brought to the knowledge of the British government, the most effectual measures have been instantly taken for instituting enquiry into the particulars of the transaction, for collecting the proofs necessary to ascertain the fact on which the charge is founded, and for submitting the whole to that regular course of proceeding in which justice is to be rendered in these cases, according to the established practice throughout Europe, and to the express stipulations of the treaties between Great Britain and Spain.

Amidst the wide and complicated operations of a naval war, extended over every quarter of the globe, it is not improbable that some disorders and irregularities may have taken place, which the utmost vigilance of the government could not immediately discover or repress; and that in the exercise of the undoubted right of a power at war, to search out and to seize the property of the enemy, the rights of neutral nations may, in some instances, have been unintentionally exposed to temporary molestation. The same observation was not less applicable to Spain in her war with France; and the short interval that has elapsed since her declaration against Great Britain has amply shewn that similar complaints will arise from her conduct in the present war.

The utmost that can be demanded, in such cases, of a power at war, is, that it should shew itself ready on all occasions to listen to the remonstrances and reclamations of those whom it may have aggrieved, and prompt and expeditious in redressing their injuries, and in restoring their property: and to the readiness of the British government to fulfil these duties, in every case where they have been called upon to do so, even Spain herself may safely be called to bear witness. Nor would it be easy to cite a more striking proof of the friendly disposition of the King's government, and of the particular attention manifested towards the rights and interests of Spain, than arises from an impartial examination of the detail of what has passed on this subject. It will be found that the causes of complaints, whether well or ill founded, which have been brought forward, are much fewer than ever have occurred within the same period in former times. And the court of Spain when called upon to specify particulars on this head, is obliged to have recourse to an allegation of the depredations of Corsican privateers.

There remains but one ground upon which the court of Spain pretends to account to the world for the rash and perfidious step which it has taken in declaring war against England, and to excuse to all Europe the calamities which cannot fail to result from such a measure;—the supposed decree of arrest asserted to have been issued against the Spanish ambassador at the court of London. The fact, to which this relates, must have been grossly mistaken before it could be made to appear, even in the eyes of Spain, a fit motive for the slightest representation or complaint, much more a justifiable cause of war between the two kingdoms.

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By the stress which is laid upon this transaction, who is there that would not be led to imagine that the law suit commenced against the Spanish ambassador was attended with some peculiar circumstances of personal indignity? that the insult was intentional, and originated with the British government? or that, on being apprized of the offence, the court of London had shewn some unwillingness or delay in proceeding to the prosecution of the parties concerned in it?

Who but would be astonished to learn that the process itself was no more than a simple citation to answer at law for a debt demanded? that the suing this process was the mistaken act of an individual, who was immediately disavowed by the government, and ordered to be prosecuted for his conduct, and who made, [but made in vain], repeated and submissive applications to the Spanish Ambassador for forgiveness and interference on his behalf? That cases of the same nature have frequently arisen in England from the ignorance of individuals, and from the ready appeal to the laws which the happy constitution of the country admits and authorises, without the previous intervention or knowledge of any branch of the executive government? And that in all similar cases, and particularly in one which had occurred only a few weeks before, precisely the same measures have been pursued by the government to vindicate the privileges of foreign ministers, and have uniformly and without exception been accepted as completely adequate to that object, and satisfactory to the dignity and honour of the sovereign whom the case concerned?

Such then are the frivolous motives, and pretended wrongs, which Spain has chosen to assign as the justification of her declaration of war against Great Britain:—Such are the topics of complaint upon which his Majesty has repeatedly offered the most unequivocal explanation; upon which he has long and earnestly endeavoured to persuade the court of Madrid to enter into a full and amicable discussion, for the purpose of averting from his own subjects, from those of his Catholic Majesty, and from Europe, the extremities of war.

When upon grounds of such a nature, and with the offer of negotiation, repeatedly presented to its choice, a power has wilfully and wantonly chosen a war, in which its prosperity, its happiness, and its safety are hazarded, and in which it will have as much to fear from the success of its allies, as from that of its enemies—It surely is not too much to presume, that, even in its own eyes, that power is not justified for the proceeding which it adopted, and that there must be some unassigned motive of irresistible necessity which induces it to pursue measures alike inconsistent with its interest and with its honour.

It will be plain to all posterity—it is now notorious to Europe, that neither to the genuine wishes, nor even to the mistaken policy of Spain, her present conduct is to be attributed;—that not from enmity towards Great Britain, not from any resentment

of

of past or apprehension of future injuries, but from a blind subserviency to the views of his Majesty's enemies, from the dominion usurped over her councils and actions by her new allies, she has been compelled to act in a quarrel, and for interests, not her own; to take up arms against one of those powers, in whose cause she had professed to feel the strongest interest; and even to menace with hostility another, against whom no cause of complaint is pretended, except its honourable and faithful adherence to its engagements.

Under these circumstances, his Majesty forbears to enumerate the several grounds of just complaint which he has had occasion, on his part, to prefer to the court of Madrid, since the conclusion of the peace between France and Spain; the many and gross instances of unjust partiality towards his enemies; of undue protection afforded to their ships; and of injuries committed, and allowed to be committed, on those of his Majesty and his subjects.

Confident of having acquitted himself to the world of any share in originating the present war, he finds in the manifest and unprovoked aggression of the enemy, a sufficient cause for calling forth the resources of his kingdoms, and the spirit of his subjects; and he commits to the divine providence the issue of a contest, which it was to the last moment his earnest endeavour to avoid, and which he now ardently desires to bring to a speedy and honourable termination.

An Account of extraordinary expenses of the Army, incurred and paid by the right honourable the Paymaster-general of his Majesty's forces, from the 25th day of December 1795 to the 6th of December 1796, both inclusive, and not provided for by parliament :

Required by an order of the honourable House of Commons of 2d December 1796.

Dates of
payments.

1796.

January 23d.

To Thomas Everet, Esq. for victualling the garrison of Gibraltar, from 17th November 1794 to 1 February 1795	—	3,075	9	10
To ditto for provisions supplied to ditto garrison	—	7,323	17	4
To ditto, for pease, utensils, and stores supplied ditto garrison	—	933	11	7
To ditto, for custom house duties, insurance, &c. on his late contract for victualling Gibraltar	—	8,379	12	11
To Alexander Davison, Esq. for provisions purchased and delivered by him for the use of the forces in Upper Canada, between the 6th of December 1794 and 25th February 1795	—	1,125	7	2
To Elizabeth Pickitone, for provisions laid up in store in the island of Jersey	—	662	19	8
To ditto, for ditto service in Jersey and Guernsey	—	965	16	6
To ditto, for ditto service in Guernsey and Alderney	—	999	16	2
		<u>23,466</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>2</u>

January 26th.

March 21st.

Dates of Payments.	Brought forward	£.
1795. December 31st.	To Bills of Exchange, drawn by B. Watfon, Esq. superintendent, &c. of the army serving on the continent, for public services	23,456 11 2
1796. January 5th, February 5th, March 4th.	To ditto, drawn by A. Motz, Esq. deputy superintendent, &c. of ditto army, for ditto service	16,066 — —
	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	— 277,050 12 8
	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	— 201,893 8 3
	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	— 164,607 16 11
	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	— 85,288 — —
	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	— 85,394 9 8
	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	— 132 2 9
		814 366 10 3 0
1795. December 31st.	To bills of exchange, drawn by Val. Jones, Esq, Commissary-general in the Leward Islands, for public services	— 30,000 — —
1796. February 3d. 27th.	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	— 2,236 — 8
	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	— 6,509 8 6
	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	— 10,297 15 —
	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	— 4 092 12 —
	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	— 80,885 9 4
	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	— 12,500 — —
December 5th.		146,521 5 6
	Carried forward	990,420 6 11

Dates of Payments.	Brought forward	£.
1795		
December 31 st .	To ditto, drawn by John Erskine, Esq. Commissary-general to the forces in the Mediterranean, for ditto service	20,136 15 8
February 3 ^d .	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	15,000 0 0
27 th .	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	16,289 18 7
March 5 th .	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	820 — —
23 ^d .	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	26,755 14 11
	To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	35,120 — 9
	To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	35,005 5 8
December 5 th	To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	29,021 10 6
		178,149 6 1
February 3 ^d .	To ditto drawn by L. Mackintosh, Deputy Commissary-general at St. Domingo, for ditto service	20,000 — —
	To ditto drawn by ditto, for service	6,600 — —
	To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	5,917 16 —
		32,517 16 0
February 3 ^d .	To ditto drawn by A. Davison, Esq. Commissary-general of the forces under the command of the Earl of Moira, for ditto service	— — —
	Carried forward	£. 1,204,473 14 7

Dates of
Payment.

	Brought forward	£.	1,204,473 14 7
To ditto drawn by Samuel Drewry, Commissary-general of the com- mand of General Doyle, for ditto service	14,276 19 4		
To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	11,296 2 4		
To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	16,930 1 3		
			42,503 2 11
To ditto drawn by John Small, Lieutenant Governor of Guernsey, for ditto Service	2,213 16 —		
To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	4,092 9 3		
To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	200 — —		
			6,506 5 3
To ditto drawn by captain D'Auvergne, prince of Bouillion, commander in chief at Jersey, for ditto service	6,925 — —		
To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	7,475 — —		
To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	6,195 — —		
			20,595 0 0
To bills of exchange, drawn by P. Le Mesurier, Lieutenant-governor of Alderney, for public service	416 16 —		
To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	142 — 6		
To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	273 14 2		
			832 10 8
	Carried forward	£.	1,274,910 13 5

Dates of Payments.	Brought forward	£.	1,274,910 13 5
1795.			
<i>February 16th.</i>	To ditto drawn by H. Hamilton, governor of Dominica, for ditto service	17,615 19 5	
	To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	19,040 2 7	
	To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	22,440 10 7	
			159,096 12 7
<i>February 16th.</i>	To ditto drawn by ditto by Sir C. Grey, K. B. for service	—	53 0 0
	To ditto, drawn by J. Stanley, president of the council at Antigua, for ditto service	5,923 15 3	
	To ditto drawn by ditto, present of the council at St. Kitt's, for ditto service	462 3 9	
			6,385 19 0
<i>February 16th.</i>	To ditto drawn by C. Leigh, governor of St. Kitt's, for ditto service	202 10 —	
	To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	1,094 6 1	
			1,296 16 1
<i>February 16th.</i>	To ditto drawn by A. Gordon, commander at Jersey, for ditto service	2,868 0 0	
	To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	2,708 0 0	
	To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	2,438 0 0	
			8,014 0 0
	Carried forward	£.	1,319,757 4 1

Dates of Payments.	Brought forward,	£.	1,319,757 4 1
<i>February 16th.</i>	To ditto drawn by the Earl of Balcarras, governor of Jamaica, for ditto service	3,985 1 7	
	To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	500 0 0	
	To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	257 14 9	
			4,742 16 4
<i>February 16th.</i>	To ditto drawn by Alexander Brymer deputy paymaster at Halifax, for ditto service	2,352 18 5	
	To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	2,915 1 8	
	To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	2,083 13 10	
			7,351 13 11
<i>February 16th.</i>	To ditto drawn by his Royal Highness Prince Edward, commander at Halifax, for ditto service	1,900 0 0	
	To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	3,000 0 0	
	To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service	1,456 11 7	
			6,356 11 7
<i>February 16th.</i>	To ditto drawn by Joseph Robley, president of the council at Tobago, for ditto service		
	To ditto drawn by Sir James Wallace, commander at Newfoundland, for ditto service		
	To bills of Exchange, drawn by William Lindsay governor of Tobago, for public service	45 12 6	
			54 19 3
			198 0 0
			1,378,461 1 2
	Carried forward		

Dates of Payments,		Brought forward	£.		
			—	—	
1796.			141	5	0
February 16th.	Ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service				
	To ditto drawn by John Robinson, Deputy Paymaster at New Brunf- wick, for ditto service		2,236	8	6
	To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service		2,355	13	11
					4,592 2 5
February 16th.	To ditto, drawn by Sir J. Wentworth, bart. Lieutenant-governor of Nova Scotia, for ditto service		1,584	13	5
	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service		300	0	0
	To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service		4,300	0	0
					6,184 13 5
February 16th	To ditto drawn by P. Mathews President of Council of Cape Breton, for ditto service		136	8	10
	To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service		221	2	2
					357 11 0
February 16th	To ditto, drawn by Edmund Fanning, Governor of St. John's, for ditto service		226	4	0
	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service		100	0	0
February 16th.	To ditto drawn by William Eppes, Commissary at Newfoundland, for ditto service		1,142	18	0
	To ditto drawn by ditto. for ditto service		66	11	3
					1,209 9 3
	Carried forward				1,381,381 19 9

Dates of
Payments.

1796.
February 16th.

1,381,381 19 9

£.

To ditto drawn by the Earl of Dunmore, Governor of the Bahama
islands, for ditto service

9,360 6 3

To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service

2,751 17 3

To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service

8,117 14 4

To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service

574 2 0

To ditto drawn by Sir Adam Williamson, K. B. Governor of St. Do-
mingo, for ditto service

20,803 18 0

(46)

795,108 1 11

To bills drawn by John Wigglesworth, Esq. Commissary-general in the
island of St. Domingo, for public services

94,500 0 0

To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service

118,750 0 0

To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service

80,000 0 0

To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service

110,000 0 0

To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service

100,000 0 0

503,250 0 0

To ditto, drawn by Sir Gilbert Elliot, Bart. Vice roy of Corfica,
for ditto service

40,718 0 0

To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service

17,046 7 9

Carried forward

£.

57,764 7 9

2,758,244 7 5

March 23d.

Dates of
Payments.

	Brought forward	£.	
To Bills of Exchange, drawn by James Crauford, Governor of Bermuda Islands, for ditto services	—	6,093 7 5	2,758,242 7 5
To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	—	2,327 15 11	
To ditto drawn by R. S. Milnes, governor of Tobago, for ditto service	—	102 0 0	8,421 3 4
To ditto, drawn by ditto, governor of Martinique, for ditto service	—	500 0 0	
To ditto, drawn by James Seaton, lieutenant governor of St. Vincent's, for ditto service	—	4,321 1 10	602 0 0
To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	—	3,712 10 6	(47)
To ditto, drawn by H. F. Mackenzie, president of the council at Grenada, for ditto service	—	95 0 0	8,033 12 4
To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	—	101 0 0	
To ditto, drawn by John Glasford, deputy commissary to the forces in the Leward Islands, for ditto service	—	31,550 0 0	196 0 0
To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	—	35,010 0 0	
	Carried forward	£.	66,560 0 0
			<u>2,842,057 3 1</u>

Dates of
Payments.

Brought forward	£				
To bills drawn by George Don, colonel in the army, for ditto service					
To ditto, drawn by Haviland Le Mesurier, deputy commissary general on the continent for ditto service					
To ditto, drawn, by G. Poyatz Ricketts, governor of Barbadoes, for ditto service					
To ditto, drawn by C. Rainsford, lieutenant governor of Gibraltar, for ditto service					
To bills of exchange, drawn by the honourable Thomas Carlton, lieutenant governor of New Brunswick, for ditto service					
To ditto, drawn by S. Mitchell, president of the council of Grenada, for ditto service					
To ditto, drawn by Sir Hew Dalrymple, lieutenant governor of Guernsey, for ditto service					
To ditto, drawn by Martin Petrie, commissary of accounts to the army in the Mediterranean, for ditto service					
To ditto, drawn by Edward Maxwell, agent for the purchase of provisions at Gibraltar, for ditto service					
To ditto, drawn by Sir G. K. Elphinstone, K. B. vice admiral of the navy, for ditto service					
To ditto, drawn by A. Urquhart, assistant commissary of the forces in the Mediterranean, for ditto services					
To ditto, drawn by Francis Drake, minister plenipotentiary to the republic of Genoa, for ditto service					
Carried forward	£				
	2,842,057	3	1		
	4,480	0	0		
	35,000	0	0		
	101	5	0		
	90	10	6		
	1625	17	1		
	63	12	3		
	2,510	8	0		
	700	0	0		
	250	0	0		
	974	12	0		
	740	13	9		
	9,158	0	11		
	2,896,752	2	7		

Dates of
Payments.

February 10th.
1796.

G

	Brought forward	£.			
To bills, drawn by James Ogilvie, general commanding the forces in Nova Scotia, for ditto service	—	2,896,752	2	7	
To ditto, drawn by William Wilson, captain in the artillery, for ditto service	—	2,323	8	6	
To ditto, drawn by Sir Jeremiah Fitzpatrick, physician to the forces, for ditto service	—	200	0	0	
To ditto, drawn by Charles Mason, commissary of accounts to the forces lately serving on the continent, for ditto service	—	248	5	4	
To ditto, drawn by W. A. Otway, captain in the navy, for the support of Toulonaise seamen	—	4,500	0	0	
To ditto, drawn by lieutenant general Rainsford, governor of Gibraltar, for special contingent expenses, for the service of that garrison	—	58,500	0	0	(40)
To ditto, drawn by general O'Hara, for ditto service	—	5,564	15	1	4
To ditto, drawn by John Hamilton, Esq. for the purchase of horses in the United States of America, for his Majesty's service in the West Indies, and for forage and freight the same	—	7,046	4	4	
To ditto, drawn by the acting deputy paymaster in the West Indies, on account of the extraordinary expenses of the army there	—	67,714	13	4	
To cash paid by Mr. Brymer acting deputy paymaster in Nova Scotia, for the extraordinary expenses of the army in that province, for one quarter, to 24th December, 1795	—	361,088	5	0	
To ditto, paid to ditto, for ditto, to the 24th March 1796	—	—	12,184	19	5
Carried forward	—	—	9,120	16	8
	£.	3,403,937	14	2	

Dates of
Payments.

	Brought forward	—	£.	3,403,937	14	2
To bills, paid by Mr. Brymer, acting deputy paymaster in Nova Scotia, for the extraordinary expences of the army in that province, to 24th June 1796	5,886	5	7			
To ditto, paid by Mr. Winslow, acting deputy paymaster in Canada, for the extraordinary expences of the army in that province, for one quarter, to 24th December 1795	—	—	—	31,214	16	1
To ditto, paid by ditto, for ditto, to 24th March 1796	—	—	—	22,037	13	7
To bills of exchange drawn by H. M. Gordon for the extraordinary expences of the forces at the Cape of Good Hope	—	—	—	2,341	0	0
To ditto, drawn by H. Rofs, for ditto of ditto forces	—	—	—	17,087	10	10
On account of pay, &c. of fundry black corps for the year 1795, raised for the service in the West Indies, &c.	—	—	—	10,120	12	9
On account of ditto for the year 1796	—	—	—	60,095	10	3
To Messrs. Rofs and Ogilvie, for bat and blanket horses for a corps of loyal French emigrants	—	—	—	818	8	0
To ditto, for 61 days subsistence and consolidated allowances of ditto corps to the 24th June 1796	—	—	—	1,755	3	11
To ditto, for 200 days forage, baggage, and bat money for ditto corps, for the year 1795, &c.	—	—	—	929	18	0
Carried forward	—	—	—	3,503	9	11
			£.	3,577,530	9	3

(50)

Dates of Payment.	Brought forward	£.	3,577,530	9	3
1796. <i>January 4th,</i>	To William Bishop late acting Governor of Barbadoes for pay of his secretary, and an allowance of stationary, to 26th May 1794 To lieutenant general Ainslie, to reimburse expenses incurred by him at the Hague in February 1793, where he was sent to concert measures with the Dutch Government	172 16 8 200 0 0			
<i>September 19th</i>	To C. Mason, Esq. commissary of accounts of the army on the continent, for the contingencies of his office To John Wigglesworth Esq. commissary general at St. Domingo, for necessities for his department, and on account of pay and expenses thereof	1,000 0 0 5,190 0 0			
<i>May 21st.</i>	To Michael Macnamara, for expenses incurred by him in raising a corps of men, &c. for the defence of Martinique To I. Mackintosh, for the contingent expenses of his office as deputy commissary of the forces at St. Domingo	2,395 17 3 200 0 0			
<i>March 31st.</i>	To Joseph Bulby, assistant commissary, at St. Domingo, to defray the expenses of artificers attending the said commissariate To Messrs. Pearse, for providing necessities for the forces in St. Domingo and Martinique To Do, for sundry articles supplied by them for the use of the forces in the general hospitals in the leeward islands	204 11 0 20,293 4 5 16,288 17 6		45,45	6 13
	Carried forward	£.	3,623,475	16	2

Dates of Payments.	Brought forward	—	£.	3,623,473 10 1
1795. March 8th,	To lieutenant Toole, for the expence attending the cure of a wound received at the capture of Martinique, whilst serving as an ensign in the eighth regiment of foot	—	72 9 0	
24th	To lieutenant general David Dundas, in reimbursement of expences incurred by him during his command in the Mediterranean in the years 1793 and 1794	—	300 0 0	
21st.	To Mr. T. Bidwell, for so much advanced to colonel Crauford for journeys on service, while employed on a special mission abroad	—	304 11 0	
	To William Mitford, Esq. to reimburse so much advanced by him to lieutenant colonel Andrew Ross, to replace articles lost in a storm on the 16th November 1795	—	230 0 0	
1796 February 26th.	To Sir G. Elliot, bart. Vice Roy of Corfica, for his equipage	—	2,000 0 0	
	To Stephen Kingston. for a cargo of Pitch, Pine, Lumber, delivered for the service of government in St. Lucia, in the year 1794, and for his expences thereon	—	1,490 16 9	
March 1st.	To Chevalier de Chevigné, in consideration of the wounds he received whilst serving with the army, which have rendered him incapable of further service	—	100 0 0	
	To Captain Jas. Urmston, for the expences in entertaining Major Generals Graham, and Morehead, on board the Sir Edward Hughes East India Man, on the West India expedition	—	400 0 0	
	Carried forward	—	4,797 16 9	
				3,628,273 6 19

Dates of Payments.	Brought forward — £.		3,628,273 6 10
<i>March 21st.</i>			
To Lieutenant Colonel M'Murdo, for bringing dispatches containing intelligence of the reduction of the Cape of Good Hope —		500 0 0	
To Lieutenant Colonel Calvert, to be paid over to Monfr. de Valcour, who was employed confidentially by the Duke of York on the Continent —		50 0 0	
To comte de Lambertye, as an indemnity for the expenses incurred by him in having been directed to raise a regiment of French infantry —		200 0 0	
To lieutenant Horace St. Paul, for expenses in bringing dispatches from Gibraltar —		45 0 0	
To B. Watson, esq. to enable him to discharge demands on account of the army lately serving on the continent —		5,000 0 0	
To lieutenant colonel Calvert, to be paid over to sundry persons for the services on the continent of Europe —		400 0 0	
To R. Johnson Smyth, for the balance of his account as assistant commissary general in Nova Scotia, between the 25th of September 1782 and the 31st of December 1783 —		133 12 11	
To lieutenant colonel H. Calvert, to be applied for the use of certain French officers under the command of the Duke of York on the continent —		3,299 0 0	
To the earl of Macartney, for his expenses during the time he was employed on a mission in Italy —		5,004 11 0	
	Carried forward — £.		14,632 3 1
			3,642,903 9 11

Dates of
Payments.

Brought forward — £.

To Mr. John Bernard, for the expences incurred by the late count
D'Hervilly in forming lists, and procuring information relative to
the French emigrant corps — — — — — 155 14 0
To Sir Ralph Abercromby, K. B. commander in chief in the West
Indies, towards providing himself with an equipage — — — — — 1,000 0 0

For the pay of several general and staff officers serving with the forces
on the continent, for sundry periods in the year 1794 — — — — — 7,766 4 11
To lieutenant general Morrison, for 182 days additional pay as quar-
ter master general, to 24th June 1795. — — — — — 689 12 1

To sundry persons, for half pay for their services on the rivers and
lakes in Canada, during the late war, to various periods — — — — — 77 19 6

To sundry ditto, for ditto for ditto services, to 24th June 1795 — — — — — 86 6 6

To L. Mackintosh, for 240 days pay as assistant commissary to the
forces in the West Indies, to 21st August 1795 — — — — — 60 0 0

To captain H. Cuyler, for 112 days pay as adjutant to a detachment
of forces at Toulon, to 17th December 1793 — — — — — 21 4 4

To Sir John Fitzpatrick, inspector of health for medical services, be-
tween 8th November 1793, and 8th September 1794 — — — — — 592 8 0

To Sir W. Fawcett, K. B. for 183 days additional pay, as adjutant
general, to 24th of December 1795 — — — — — 693 7 11

Carried forward — £.

1796.
January 5th.

3,642,905 9 11

1,155 14 0

(54)

9,997, 3 3

3,654,058 7 2

Dates of
Payments.

Brought forward	—	£.	3,644,358	7	2
To lieutenant general Morrison, for 183 days ditto, as quarter master general to ditto	693 7 11				
To ditto, for 365 days pay of his two affiants, to ditto	172 17 6				
To lieutenant general Rainsford, for 365 days pay as lieutenant general, with two aides de camps, to 24th December, 1794	1,683 2 6				
To fundry persons, for half pay for their services on the rivers and lakes in Canada during the late war, to various periods	182 16 0				
For the pay of fundry affiant commissaries on the continent, to 24th December 1795	1,731 5 0				
To Sir G. Elliot, Bart. for three quarters of a year's salary as Vice Roy of Corsica	6,000 0 0				
To captain N. Houe, for 220 days pay as major of brigade, to 24th December 1795. and for allowance of forage	123 3 11				
To the representatives of J. Wright, for 39 days pay as surgeon to the forces in Guadaloupe, to 7th June 1794	18 9 5				
To E. Home, Esq. for 365 days pay. as surgeon to the forces, to 24th December 1795	172 17 6				
To B. Watfon, Esq. for 182 days pay as superintendent and director of forage, &c. of the army on the continent, to 1st March 1795	728 0 0				
Carried forward	—	£.	11,575	19	9
			3,565,634	6	11

Dates of
Payments.

1795.

April 2d.

7th.

1796.

January 11th.

March 31st.

April 19th.

Brought forward		£.	3,665,634 6 11
To Mr. Window, on account of subsistence of a corps of Waggoners	550 0 0		
To Do. for Do. service	1,500 0 0		
To Do. for Do. service	1,300 0 0		
			3,350 0 0
To Messrs. Adams and Welsford, for supplying Bread, forage, wood, and Straw, to the forces encamped, in the year 1795, in the southern district	32,000 0 0		
To Do. for flour and Bread supplied at Poole, Portsmouth and Southampton	2,900 16 6		
To Do. for flour supplied to the bakery at Poole	1,395 5 2		
To Do. for bread, &c. delivered to the troops at Southampton	3,706 15 9		
To Messrs. Adams and Hodge, for the balance of their account, as contractors for furnishing the forces encamped in England with Bread, &c. in the year 1794	23 1 4		
To Messrs. W. D. Adams and G. Welsford, towards enabling them to supply bread, Forage, Wood, and straw, to the forces encamped in England in the year 1796	20,000 0 0		
To Do. for bread supplied to the forces at Portsmouth, Southampton, Poole, Plymouth, &c.	14,542 8 3		63,568 7 0
Carried forward		£.	3,072,552 13 11

Dates of Payments.	Brought forward	—	£.	3,628,273	6	10
To Do. for supplies of bread delivered to the troops at Portsmouth	3,247	8	0			
To Do. for Do. service	4,003	8	7			
To Do. towards enabling them to supply bread, forage, wood, and straw, to the forces encamped in England in the year 1796	23,000	0	0			
To Do. for supplies to the troops encamped in South Britain in the year 1795	10,923	19	7			
To Do. for supplies of bread delivered to the troops at Portsmouth, &c.	4,431	15	8			
To Do. for Do. delivered to Do. in the county of Essex, &c.	4,205	15	11			
To Mr. H. Cutler, for supplies delivered to the army under the command of the Earl of Moira, from 9th June to 31st August 1795	18,309	6	9			
To Do. for Do. delivered by him to the army at Southampton, from 1st September 1795 to 30th January 1796	21,484	16	5			
To W. Fettes, for supplying bread, forage, wood, and straw, to the forces encamped in North Britain in the year 1795	2,992	5	7			
To Do. for Do. service in the year 1796	3,000	0	0			
To Do. for Do. service	5,000	0	0			
				100,598	16	6
Carried forward	—	—	£.	5,728,872	3	4

Dates of
Payments.

1794.

October 26th.

December 3d

1795

February 13th.

25th.

April 29th.

May 27th.

June 3d.

	Brought forward	£.	3,728,872	3	4
For baggage and forage money, for additional officers of the Buckingham Militia, ordered to take the field	75	0	0		
For additional bat horses for the 79th and 80th Regiments of Foot serving on the continent	378	0	0		
For bat horses for Do. Regiments	1,171	16	0		
To the colonels of sundry regiments of foot, for baggage and forage for their respective regiments, embarked for foreign service	935	0	0		
To the colonels of sundry Do. for Do. for their respective regiments ordered on foreign service, in part of a warrant of this date for £.8,778, 15s.	7,171	5	0		
To Do. for bat and blanket horses for Do. Regiments, in part of a warrant of this date for £.3,360.	2,730	0	0		
For baggage and forage money for the 130th Regiment of Foot, ordered to embark for foreign service	532	10	0		
For bat and blanket horses for Do regiment.	210	0	0		
To lieutenant colonel Myddleton, to complete baggage and forage money for the Denbigh Militia, having been ordered to take the field in 1794	63	18	0		
			13,267	9	0
Carried forward		£.	3,742,139	12	4

Dates of Payments.	Brought forward	£.	3,743,139 12 4
1795. July 13th.	To the colonels of sundry corps of Militia, for baggage horses for their respective corps, ordered to take the field —	2,513 14 0	
	To the colonels of sundry Do. for an allowance for their respective corps, having been ordered to take the field, being the third year of their encampment —	8,512 12 0	
22d.	For forage money to the general and staff officers attending the forces on taking the field in the year 1795 —	11,856 0 0	
29th	For bat and blanket horses for sundry Regiments of Foot ordered on foreign service —	2,100 0 0	
	To the colonels of sundry Regiments of Foot, for baggage and forage money for their respective Regiments, ordered to take the field —	14,253 15 0	
	To the colonels of sundry corps of Fencible Cavalry, for baggage horses for their respective corps, ordered to take the field —	1,304 2 0	
August 5th.	To colonel Bayly, for forage money for the West Middlesex Militia, in the year 1795 —	289 12 0	
	To complete allowance of baggage and forage money for the North Gloucester Militia, in the year 1794 —	60 0 0	
	For baggage horses, for the additional company of Montgomery Militia, ordered to take the field —	37 16 0	40,927 11 0
	Carried forward	£.	3,784,067 13 4

Dates of
Payments.

August 5th

3,784,067 13 4

£.

Brought forward

For baggage and forage money to the officers of the 2d and 3d Battalions of the 1st Regiment of Foot Guards, ordered to take the field
For Do. for the second Battalion of the 3d Regiment of Foot Guards, ordered to take the field
For bat horses for two troops of the 2d Regiment of Dragoons, when ordered on foreign service
For baggage horses for 23d Regiment of Dragoons, when encamped in the year 1794
To the colonels of sundry Regiments of Dragoon Guards and Dragoons, for baggage horses for their respective corps, ordered to take the field
For bat, baggage, and forage money, for certain officers of the 8th Regiment of Dragoons, ordered to embark for service in July 1794
For baggage horses for sundry corps, ordered on foreign service
For baggage and forage money for sundry corps, ordered on foreign service
For Do. for additional officers appointed on the augmentation of sundry Regiments of Foot, ordered on Do.

865 0 0
426 5 0
151 4 0
321 6 0
1,946 14 0
138 15 0
420 0 0
5,420 0 0
7,695 0 0

7,384 4 0

Carried forward

£.

3,802,451 17 4

Dates of Payments.	Brought forward — £.		3,802,451 17 4
<i>August 5th</i>			
For bat and blanket horses for fundry corps of Foot, ordered on Do.	—	4,970 0 0	
For Do. for fundry Regiments and Detachments of Dragoons, ordered on Do.	—	840 0 0	
For baggage horses for the additional Company of the Northern Regiment of fencibles, on taking the field in 1695	—	75 12 0	
For baggage and forage money to the officers of the second battalion of the Coldstream Regiment of Foot Guards, ordered to take the field	—	426 5 0	
For baggage horses for first battalion of 90th Regiment of Foot, ordered to take the field in 1794	—	491 8 0	
For baggage horses for the Foot Guards	—	1,606 10 0	
To complete the allowance of baggage and forage money for the first battalion of 78th Foot, on taking the field in the year 1794	—	125 0 0	
For baggage horses for the additional company of the North Gloucester Militia, ordered to take the field	—	37 16 0	
For baggage and forage money for the additional company to the Montgomery Militia, ordered to take the field	—	45 0 0	
	Carried forward —	8,617 11 0	
		3,811,069 8 4	

Dates of
Payments.

August 5th

Brought forward	£.	3,811,069	8	4
For baggage and forage to the subaltern officers of sundry corps of Militia who had taken the field in the year 1795 for the first time, without having received any part of the field allowances issued in 1793	375	0	0	
For forage money for the Lancashire Militia, ordered to take the field	348	4	0	
For Do. for the 97th Regiment of Foot, ordered to take the field	373	8	0	
For baggage and forage money for the Argyll and southern regiments of Fencibles, ordered to prepare to take the field	1,087	10	0	
For an allowance to the officers of sundry corps of Militia who kept up their baggage horses from the campaign 1794 to the campaign 1795	255	0	0	
For bat and blanket horses for colonel Irwine's York Hussars, ordered on Foreign service	170	0	0	
For baggage horses for Do.	80	0	0	
For Do. for the York Rangers and Fuzileers, ordered on foreign service	1,280	0	0	
For bat and blanket horses for Do. corps	340	0	0	
For baggage and forage money for the 86th regiment of foot ordered on foreign service	851	5	0	
Carried forward		5,160	7	0
		3,818,229	15	4

Dates of
Payments

August 5th

Brought forward —
For baggage horses for the Essex Fencible Cavalry, ordered to take the field —
To the colonels of fundry Regiments of Foot, for baggage and forage money for their respective Regiments, ordered to take the field. —
To Lord Charles Somerset, for his allowance of bat and forage money in the year 1795, as commandant of 103d Regiment of Foot —
For baggage and forage money for the 10th Regiment of Foot, ordered on foreign service —
For bat and blanket horses, for fundry Regiments of Dragoons, ordered on Do. —
For baggage horses for Do. Regiments —
For baggage and forage money for the 2d battalion of the 7th Foot, ordered on foreign service —
For Do. for additional officers appointed on the augmentation of fundry Regiments of Foot, serving abroad —
For Do. for fundry officers of the late 102d Regiment of Foot, ordered to hold themselves in readiness for foreign service —

Carried forward —

£. 3,818,229 15 4

340 4 0

996 5 0

62 10 0

891 5 0

390 0 0

180 0 0

527 10 0

8,052 10 0

171 5 0

11,611 9 0

£.

3,832,841 4 4

Dates of
Payments.

August 5th

Brought forward	£.	3,822,841	4	4
For Do. for the 90th Regiment of Foot, ordered on foreign service	885	0	0	
For baggage horses for the Argyll Fencibles, ordered to be in readiness to take the field	207	18	0	
For an allowance to fundry Militia corps, who have kept up their baggage horses from the campaign 1794 to the campaign 1795	265	0	0	
For forage money for the East Middlesex Militia, having taken the field in the year 1795	289	12	0	
				1,647 10 0
(64)				
Issued to the barrack master general.				
For providing coals, candles, beer, bedding, utensils, furniture, &c. for cavalry and infantry in barracks, in Great Britain, Guernsey, Jersey, and Alderney, and for repairs, contingencies, &c.	405,184	7	0	
For forage for cavalry stationed in ditto	106,099	6	4	
For bedding, furniture, and stores sent to Gibraltar	9,100	0	0	
For fundry supplies sent for the barracks, in the island of St. Domingo	29,079	15	2	
For fundry supplies sent for the barracks, at the Cape of Good Hope	6,930	0	0	
For bedding, stores, &c. sent to Newfoundland, and for expences incurred there for fuel, candles, &c. for the troops stationed therein, and for repairs, contingencies, &c.	5,190	0	0	
				561,583 8 6
Carried forward	£.	4,396,073	2	10

Dates of Payment.	Brought forward	£.	4,396,73	2	1	0
	For erecting and providing hospitals in Great Britain, &c.	16,471	12	2		
1795. December 31st.	To John Trotter, Esq. for providing hospital bedding, &c. for the use of the forces in the Leeward Islands	22,473	14	5		
1796. January 11th.	To ditto, for providing hospital utensils and stores for the forces at Colchester	1,532	16	4		
27th.	To ditto, for providing hospital bedding, &c. for the forces in sundry hospitals, in and adjacent to Chelsea	4,879	3	5		
March 2d.	To ditto, for providing ditto for the use of the forces	4,703	0	1		
	To ditto for ditto service	6,433	5	9		
	To ditto, for sundry articles provided by him for the department of the quarter master general, going to the West Indies	6,256	1	6		
21st.	To ditto, for providing camp necessaries, hospital bedding, &c. for the use of the forces	36,421	15	11		
March 21st.	To ditto, for providing hospital bedding for ditto	18,996	1	11		
	To ditto, for providing camp necessaries and hospital bedding for the use of the forces	48,544	2	3		
	To ditto, for ditto service	15,740	15	0		
	To ditto for ditto service	19,392	6	0		
	Carried forward					
		£.	776,369,82	5	0	

Dates of
Payments.

	Brought forward,	£.	776,369,82 5 0
To ditto, for hospital bedding for the use of the forces	—	12,751 5 0	
To ditto, for camp necessaries, hospital bedding, &c. for ditto	—	11,041 3 5	
			209,165 11 0
<i>January 18th.</i>			
To pay a bill of exchange, drawn by the Royal Bank of Scotland, for one year's allowance for furnishing specie to the troops in Scotland, to Christmas 1795	—	432 19 3	
To John Geddes, Esq. for necessaries, &c, for the forces in North Britain, for the year 1795	—	1,359 6 8	
			1,792 5 11
<i>January 8th.</i>			(66)
To James Window, Esq. agent to the inspector general of regimental infirmaries, on account for contingent disbursements for hospitals, &c.	—	5,000 0 0	
To ditto for ditto service	—	1,000 0 0	
To ditto for ditto service	—	8,000 0 0	
To ditto for ditto service	—	8,000 0 0	
To ditto for ditto service	—	5,000 0 0	
To ditto for ditto service	—	5,000 0 0	
To ditto, for ditto service	—	5,000 0 0	
To ditto, for ditto service	—	5,000 0 0	
			210,657,19 11 0
	Carried forward	£.	

Dates of Payments.	Brought forward	£.	210,957,16 11 0
1796. February 16th.	To ditto, for ditto service To ditto, for ditto service	— 5,000 0 0 — 4,000 0 0	51,000 0 0
February 16th.	For the contingent allowance for the field officers and captains of the 1st regiment of foot guards, from 25th December 1794 to 24th June 1795 For ditto, to the ditto of the 2d regiment of ditto, from ditto to ditto For ditto, to the ditto of the 3d regiment of ditto, from ditto to ditto For ditto, to the ditto of the 1st regiment of ditto, from 25th June, to 24th December 1795 For ditto, to the ditto of the 2d regiment of ditto, from ditto to ditto For ditto, to the ditto of the 3d regiment of ditto, from ditto to ditto For ditto, to the ditto of ditto regiment, from 25th June to 24th December 1794	2,708 1 0 1,708 3 0 1,708 3 0 2,708 1 0 1,708 3 0 1,708 3 0 1,708 3 0	13,956 17 0
January 1st.	To Messrs. Barnard and Brookbank, for swords supplied to the fer-jents and drummers of the invalid companies	196 9 6	
7th.	To Messrs. J. and F. Carleton, on account for embarkations, &c. of troops at different ports in Ireland	6,000 0 0	
11th.	To Messrs. Cox and Co. on account of subsistence of sundry draughts and invalids at Eling barracks, Southampton	500 0 0	
	Carried forward	—	64,956,17 0 0

Dates of Payments.	Brought forward	£.	64,956,17 0 0
<i>February 29th.</i>	To ditto on account of ditto service To T. Wright, printer of The Hue and Cry and Police Gazette, for advertising deserters between the 10th April and 5th July 1795 To ditto, for advertising ditto between the 10th July and 5th Oct- ber 1795	— 2,000 0 0 232 12 0 218 13 11	
<i>March 31st.</i>	To T. Rice, Esq. surveyor of the guards, for work done at the horse and foot guards in the year 1793 To ditto for ditto, done at the foot guards rooms, Somerset House barracks, recruit house, &c. in ditto year To William Gorton, Esq. for providing a table for the officers of the foot and life guards on duty at St. James's, &c. from 25th March to 23d September 1795	— 2,532 4 4 4,678 16 1 4,083 7 6	
<i>April 9th.</i>	To Major General Fox, for the amount of expenditures at Chatham, for pay, contingencies of the staff, &c. for six months, to 24th June 1795	2,888 17 11	
12th	To Messrs. J. and F. Carleton, on account for embarkations, &c. of troops at different ports in Ireland	3,580 18 8	
19th.	To Messrs. Robert Wilfon and sons, as a compensation on account of losses sustained by them on certain quantities of wheat	231 13 9	
Carried forward	—	£.	17,103,5 0 0

Dates of Payments.	Brought forward	—	£.	17,103 5 0
<i>April 19th.</i>	To count de Botheril, for certain articles purchased by him, which have been applied for the service of the army	561	6 8	
	To Messrs. J. and G. F. Carleton, for expenses incurred by them for bedding and necessaries supplied to the 79th regiment of foot, on its embarkation from Ireland in the year 1794	388	19 4	
	To Sir William Fawcett, K. B. for the contingent expenses of the office of adjutant general, from 25th June to 24th December 1795	315	5 0	
	To lieutenant general Morrison, for his contingent expenses as quarter master general, from 25th December 1794 to 24th June 1795	224	4 0	
	To ditto for ditto, from 25th June to 24th December 1795	234	4 0	
	To the Rev. T. Gamble, for expenses in constructing a telegraph for the army under Sir Ralph Abercrombie	184	17 7	
	To Sir William Howe, K. B. for the hire of ground for encamping the troops under his command in the year 1795	1,660	18 8	
	To Sir W. Pitt, K. B. for ditto in ditto year	273	4 11	
	To lieutenant colonel St. Leger, for several articles of cloathing, and appointments belonging to the late 31st regiment dragoons, appropriated to the public service	1,441	11 10	
	Carried forward	—	£.	2,110,14 0 0

Dates of Payments.	Brought forward	£.	2,110,14 0 0
To ditto, for the expence incurred in providing cloathing and ap- pointments for the augmentation to ditto regiment	—	712 3 11	
To George Garnier, Esq. apothecary general, for medicines supplied for the use of the army, from 1st January to 24th June 1795	—	20,544 6 1	
To Mr. John Charlton, for re-payment of so much surcharged in his declared account, as late agent to regimental infirmaries, for want of vouchers, which have since been produced	—	210 6 0	
To L. Morfe, Esq. for carrying on for one year to Midsummer 1796, a progressive list of the commissions of all the officers of the army	—	103 3 0	
To John Brickwood, Esq. to be remitted for the service of his Im- perial Majesty	—	200,000 0 0	
To Messrs. Cox and Co. on account of subsistence of fundry draughts and invalids, under the care of Major Barrette	—	2,500 0 0	
To A. Loughnan, Esq. to be remitted, for the service of his Impe- rial Majesty	—	70,000 0 0	
To ditto, for ditto service	—	60,000 0 0	
To ditto, for ditto service	—	70,000 0 0	
To L. Morfe, Esq. for his contingent disbursements, as late secretary to field marshal Lord Amhurst, from 25th December 1794 to 25th March 1795	—	343 13 1	
Carried forward	—	£.	242,253 11 2

Dates of
Payment.

December 3d.

Brought forward

£.

242,253 11 8

To William Gorton, Esq. for providing a table for the office of the
foot and life guards on duty at St. James's, &c. from 24th Septem-
ber 1795 to 24th March 1796

— 4,083 7 6

Deduct,

460,926 0 3

(71)

5,267,683 6 8

Voted on account of extraordinary

Repayments by Claude Scott, Esq.

Ditto, by John Brickwood, Esq.

Ditto, by the Executors of William Brummell, Esq.

Ditto by A. Davidson, Esq.

The sum voted for the Sardinian subsidy

— 1,350,000 0 0

— 358,000 0 0

— 20,000 0 0

— 20,000 0 0

— 12,169 13 0

— 200,000 0 0

1,987,169 13 6

3,280,513 13 2

£.

War Office, 7th December 1796.

W. WINDHAM.

STATE PAPERS,

RELATIVE TO THE

Negotiation for Peace between Great Britain and France,
laid upon the tables of the two Houses of Parliament.

[For the copy of the note transmitted to Mr. BARTHELEMI, at *Basle* in *Switzerland*, by Mr. WICKHAM dated *Berne* March 8th. 1796, of the note transmitted to Mr. WICKHAM by Mr. BARTHELEMI, dated *Basle* 26 h. March, 1796, and of the note of the COURT of LONDON thereupon dated *Downing Street* April 10th. 1796. vide. *Appendix* page 3, Session 1796.]

(No. 1.)

Downing Street, Sept. 6, 1796,

SIR,

In obedience to the orders of the King, my master, I have the honour to transmit to you the inclosed note, and to request of you that you will forward it to his Danish Majesty's minister at Paris, to be by him communicated to the executive directory.

The sentiments of your court are too well known to the King to admit of his Majesty's entertaining any doubt of the satisfaction with which his Danish Majesty will see the intervention of his ministers employed on such an occasion, or of the earnestness with you, Sir, will concur in a measure that has for its object the re-establishment of peace.

I have the honour to be, with the most
perfect consideration,
Sir, your most humble,
and most obedient servant,

GRENVILLE.

To the Count Wedel Jarlsberg, &c. &c. &c.

(No. 2.)

NOTE.

His Britanic Majesty, animated with the same desire which he has already manifested, to terminate, by just, honourable, and permanent conditions of peace, a war which has extended itself throughout all parts of the world, is willing to omit nothing on his part which may contribute to this object.

It is with this view that he has thought it proper to avail himself of the confidential intervention of the ministers of a neutral power, to demand of the executive directory passports for a person of confidence, whom his Majesty would send to Paris with a commission to discuss, with the government there, all the means the most proper to produce so desirable an end.

And his Majesty is persuaded that he shall receive, without delay, through the same channel, a satisfactory answer to this demand.

demand, which cannot fail to place, in a still clearer light, the just and pacific dispositions which he entertains in common with our allies.

GRENVILLE.

Westminster, Sept. 6, 1796.

(No. 3.)

MY LORD,

I have the honour to inform your Excellency, that the note addressed to the Executive Directory of France, in date of the 6th of the present month, was transmitted by Mr. Koenemann, Charge d'Affairs of His Danish majesty, to Mr. Delacroix, Minister for foreign affairs at Paris, who promised that an answer should be returned to it, after it had been submitted to the consideration of the government. Three days having elapsed in expectation of this answer, Mr. Koenemann went a second time to the Minister above mentioned, who gave him to understand, that the Executive Directory had not permitted him to return an answer in writing, but that he was directed to express himself verbally to this effect:

“ That the Executive Directory of the French republic would not, for the future, receive or answer any overtures or confidential papers transmitted through any intermediate channel from the enemies of the Republic, that if they would send persons furnished with full powers and official papers, these might, upon the frontiers, demand the passports necessary for proceeding to Paris.”

I have the honour to be, with the most perfect respect,

My Lord,

Your Excellency's most humble and obedient servant,

(Signed)

Comte de WEDEL JARLSBERG.

London, Sept. 23, 1796.

(No. 4.)

SIR,

Paris, Sept. 19, 1796,

I was indisposed at my country house when your Excellency's courier brought me the letters, which your Excellency did me the honour to write to me on the 7th inst. together with the note of Lord Grenville inclosed therein. I set off for Paris on the following day, where, after demanding an audience of Citizen Delacroix, Minister for Foreign Affairs, I presented the note above mentioned, accompanied by another in my own name, in which I explained the motives that had induced me to undertake a measure for which I had no authority from my court. He promised to submit the two notes to the inspection of the government, and to return me an answer immediately. Having waited for three days without receiving an answer, I went a second time to wait upon the minister, who, in a very dry tone, informed me, that the Executive Directory had not permitted him to return an answer in writing.

APPENDIX, VOL. I. 1796.

writing, but that he was directed to express himself verbally to this effect

“ That the Executive Directory of the French Republic would not for the future receive or answer any confidential overtures, papers transmitted through any intermediate channel from the enemies of the Republic ; but that if they would send persons furnished with full powers and official papers, these might upon the Frontiers, demand the passports necessary for proceeding to Paris.”

Such, Sir, is the result of a measure which I have taken at your request. I wish, for the sake of humanity, that we may meet with better success at some future period : but I fear that this period is still at a great distance.

I have the honour to be,
With respectful attachment, Sir,
Your Excellency's most humble
And most obedient Servant,

KORNEIMANN.

To his Excellency the Count Wedel
Jarlsberg, &c. &c. &c.

(No. 5.)

NOTE.

In demanding of the Executive Directory of the French republic, through the intervention of the ministers of a neutral power a passport for a confidential person to be sent to Paris, the Court of London accompanied this demand, with express declaration, that this person should be commissioned to discuss with the government all the means the most proper for conducing to the re-establishment of peace.

The King, persevering in the same sentiments, which he has already so unequivocally declared, will not leave to his enemies the smallest pretext for eluding a discussion, the result of which will necessarily serve either to produce the happiness of so many nations, or at least to render evident the views and dispositions of those who oppose themselves to it.

It is therefore in pursuance of these sentiments, that the undersigned is charged to declare, that, as soon as the executive directory shall think proper to transmit to the undersigned the necessary passports (of which he, by this note, renews the demand already made, his Britannic Majesty will send to Paris a person furnished with full powers and official instructions, to negotiate with the Executive Directory on the means of terminating the present war, by a pacification, just, honourable, solid, calculated to restore
peace

peace to Europe, and ensure for the time to come the general tranquillity.

(Signed)

GRENVILLE.

*Westminster, Sept. 27, 1796.
To the Minister for Foreign Affairs
at Paris.*

(No. 6.)

I have the honour to transmit to Lord Grenville a copy of the decree of the Executive Directory of the French Republic, in answer to this note of the * 27th September, 1796, (O. S.)

He will there see a proof of the earnest desire of the French government to profit of the overture that is made to them, in the hope that it may lead to peace with the government of England.

I have the honour to send to him, at the same time, the passports required for the minister Plenipotentiary, whom his Britannic Majesty proposes to name to treat; and I request Lord Grenville to accept the assurance of my personal wishes for the success of this negotiation, as well as that of my most perfect consideration.

(Signed)

CH. DELACROIX

*Paris, 11 Vendemaire, 5th year
of the French Republic.*

(No. 7.)

EXTRACT FROM THE REGISTER OF THE DECREES OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTORY.

*The 9th Vendemaire, 5th year of the French Republic, One
and Indivisible.*

The Executive Directory, upon consideration of the note addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, by Lord Grenville dated Westminster, September 24, 1796, wishing to give a proof of the desire which it entertains to make peace with England, decrees as follows:

The Minister for Foreign Affairs is charged to deliver the necessary passport to the envoy of England, who shall be furnished with full powers, not only for preparing and negotiating the

* Sic orig.

k 2

peace

peace between the French Republic and that power, but for concluding it definitively between them.

True copy,

(Signed) L. M. REVELIERE LEPEAUX, President.

By the Executive Directory.

For the Secretary General,

(Signed)

LE TOURNEUR.

Certified true copy,

The Minister for Foreign Affairs,

By the Minister, J. GUIRAUDET, Secretary Gen.

(No. 7.*)

Lord Malmesbury, who is appointed by the KING to treat with the French government for a just and equitable peace, calculated to restore peace to Europe, and to ensure the public tranquility for the time to come, will have the honour of delivering this letter from me to M. Delacroix.

The distinguished rank and merit of the Minister, of whom His Majesty has made choice on this occasion, makes it unnecessary for me to say any thing in his recommendation; at the same time that it furnishes a fresh proof of the desire of His Majesty to contribute to the success of this negotiation: for which object I entertain the most sanguine wishes.

Monsieur Delacroix will have the goodness to accept from me the assurance of my most perfect consideration.

(Signed)

GRENVILLE.

Westminster, October 13, 1796.

To the Minister for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

(No. 8.)

Lord Malmesbury, named by his Britannic Majesty, as his Plenipotentiary to the French Republic, has the honour to announce, by his secretary, to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, his arrival at Paris; and to request of him, at the same time, to be so good as to appoint the hour at which he may wait upon him for the purpose of communicating to him the object of his mission.

Paris Oct. 22. 1796.

To the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

(No. 9.)

The Minister for Foreign Affairs learns with satisfaction the arrival of Lord Malmesbury, plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty.

jeſty. He will have the honour to receive him to-morrow, at eleven o'clock in the morning, or at any later hour that may ſuit him, till two o'clock. He hopes that Lord Malmesbury will forgive him for thus limiting the time, on account of the nature and multiplicity of his occupations.

1ſt Brumaire, An. 5. (October 22, 1796.)
To Lord Malmesbury, Miniſter Plenipotentiary
from his Britannic Maſteſty to the French Re-
public, at Paris.

(No. 10.)

Lord Malmesbury has the honour to thank the Miniſter for Foreign Affairs, for the obliging answer which he has juſt received from him.

He accepts with pleaſure the firſt moment propoſed, and will wait upon him to-morrow morning, at eleven o'clock preciſely.

Paris, Oct. 22.
To the Miniſter for Foreign Affairs.

(No. 11.)¹

The Miniſter for Foreign Affairs has the honour to apprize Lord Malmesbury, commiſſioner plenipotentiary of his Britanic Maſteſty, that he has received from the Executive Directory the neceſſary powers for negotiating and concluding peace between the Republic and his Maſteſty.

To-morrow, if Lord Malmesbury pleaſes the reſpective powers ſhall be exchanged. The Miniſter for Foreign Affairs will then be ready to receive the propoſitions, which Lord Malmesbury is commiſſioned to make to the Republic on the part of his Britanic Maſteſty.

The Miniſter for Foreign Affairs requeſts Lord Malmesbury to accept the aſſurances of this high conſideration.

(Signed)

CH. DELACROIX.

2 Brumiere, An. 5.—(Oct. 22, 1796.)

(No. 12.)

Lord Malmesbury has the honour to preſent his acknowledgments to the Miniſter for Foreign Affairs, for the communication which he has juſt made to him, and he will have the honour to wait on him to-morrow, at the hour which he ſhall have the goodneſs to appoint, to receive the copy of the full powers with which he is furniſhed on the part of the Executive Directory; and as ſoon as they ſhall have been exchanged, he will be ready to commence the negotiation with which he is charged.

He

He requests the Minister for Foreign Affairs to accept the assurances of his high consideration.

(Signed)

MALMESBURY.

Paris, Oct. 23, 1796.

(No. 13.)

EXTRACT FROM THE REGISTER OF THE DECREES OF
THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORY.

2 Brumaire, 22 Nov. 5th Year of the French Republic
One and Indivisible.

The Executive Directory, after having heard the report of the Minister for foreign affairs :

The citizen Charles Delacroix, Minister for Foreign Affairs, is charged to negotiate with Lord Malmesbury, commissioner plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty, furnished with full powers to prepare and negotiate peace between the French Republic and that power, and to conclude it definitively between them. The Directory gives to the said Minister all powers necessary for concluding and signing the treaty of peace to take place between the Republic and his Britannic Majesty. He shall conform himself to the instructions which shall be given him. He shall render a regular account, from time to time, of the progress and of the issue of the negotiations.

The present decree shall not be printed at this time.

A true copy.

(Signed)

L. R. REVELIERE LE PEUX.

By the Executive Directory.

The Secretary General.

(Signed)

LA GARDE.

Copy.

The Minister for foreign affairs.

(Signed)

CH. DELACROIX.

By the Minister.

(L. S.)

T. GUIRAUDET, Sec. Gen.

[For the Letters, &c. that passed between Lord MALMESBURY and M. DE LACROIX (from No. 14, to No. 21, inclusive,) *vide* the preceding pages of Appendix.]

No. 22)

The undersigned, in reply to your second note of yesterday, is ordered, by the Executive Directory, to declare to you, that he has nothing to add to the answer which has been addressed to you. He is also instructed to ask you, whether, on each official communication

communication which shall take place between you and him, it will be necessary for you to send a courier to receive special instructions?

CH. DELACROIX.

*Paris, 23 Brumaire,
(Nov. 13) 5th Year.*

(No. 23.)

The undersigned will not fail to transmit to his court the note which he has just received from the Minister for Foreign Affairs. He declares likewise that he shall dispatch couriers to his court as often as the official communications to him may require special instructions.

(Signed)

MALMESBURY.

Paris 13th. Nov. 1796.

(No. 24.)

NOTE.

The Court of London, having been informed of what has passed in consequence of the last memorial, delivered by its order to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, does not think it necessary to add any thing to the answer made by the undersigned to the two questions which the Directory thought proper to address to him.

That Court waits therefore, and with the greatest anxiety, for an explanation of the sentiments of the Directory, with regard to the principle it has proposed, as the basis of negotiation, and the adoption of which appeared to be the best means of accelerating the progress of a discussion so important to the happiness of so many nations.

The undersigned has, in consequence, received orders to renew the demand of a frank and precise answer on this point, in order that his court may know, with certainty, whether the Directory accepts that proposal; or desires to make any change or modifications whatever in it; or lastly, whether it would wish to propose any other principle that may promote the same end.

MALMESBURY.

Paris Nov. 26, 1796.

(No. 25.)

In answer to the note delivered yesterday, (November 26,) by Lord Malmesbury, the undersigned Minister for Foreign Affairs is instructed, by the Directory, to observe, that the answers, made on the 5th and 22d of last Brumaire, contained an acknowledgment of the principle of compensation, and that, in order to remove every pretext for farther discussion on that point, the undersigned,

designated, in the name of the Executive Directory, now makes a formal and positive declaration of such acknowledgment.

In consequence, Lord Malmesbury is again invited to give a speedy and categorical answer to the proposal made to him on the 22d of last Brumaire, and which was conceived in these terms: "The undersigned is instructed by the Executive Directory, to invite you to designate, without the least delay, and expressly, the objects of reciprocal compensation which you have to propose."

CH. DELACROIX.

Paris Nov. 27, 1796.

(No. 26.)

The undersigned Minister Plenipotentiary of his Britanic Majesty, in answer to the note dated this morning, which was sent to him by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, hastens to assure him, that he will not delay a moment in communicating it to his court, from which he must necessarily wait for further orders, before he can explain himself upon the important points which it contains,

(Signed)

MALMESBURY.

Paris, 27th Nov. 1796.

(No. 27.)

NOTE.

The undersigned is charged to transmit to the Minister of Foreign Affairs the inclosed memorial, containing the proposals of his court, with respect to the application of the general principle already established, as the basis of the negotiation for peace.

He will with the utmost readiness, enter with that Minister into every explanation which the progress of the negotiation will allow, and he will not fail to enter into the discussion of these propositions, or of any counter-project which may be transmitted to him on the part of the Executive Directory, with that frankness and that spirit of conciliation, which correspond with the just and pacific intentions of his court.

(Signed)

MALMESBURY.

Paris, Dec. 17, 1796.

(No. 28.)

**CONFIDENTIAL MEMORIAL ON THE PRINCIPAL OBJECTS OF
RESTITUTION, COMPENSATION, AND RECIPROCAL AR-
RANGEMENT.**

The principle already established, as the basis of the negotiation, by the consent of the two governments, is founded on
restitutions

restitutions to be made by his Britannic Majesty to France, in compensation for the arrangements to which that power may consent, in order to satisfy the just pretensions of the Allies of the King, and to preserve the political balance of Europe.

In order to accomplish these objects, in the manner the most complete, and to offer a fresh proof of the sincerity of his wishes for the re-establishment of general tranquillity, his Majesty would propose, that there should be given to this principle, on each side, all the latitude of which it may be susceptible.

I. His Majesty demands therefore,

1. The restitution, to his Majesty, the Emperor and King, of all his dominions, on the footing of the *Status ante Bellum*.

2. The re-establishment of peace between the Germanic Empire and France, by a suitable arrangement, conformable to the respective interests, and to the general safety of Europe. This arrangement to be negociated with his Imperial Majesty, as constitutional head of the Empire, either by the intervention of the King, or immediately as his Imperial Majesty shall prefer.

3. The evacuation of Italy by the French troops, with an engagement not to interfere in the internal affairs of that country which should be re-established, as far as possible, upon the footing; of the *Status ante Bellum*.

In the course of the negociation, a more detailed discussion may be proper to adopt, respecting the objects of these three articles, in order to the providing more effectually for the future security of the respective limits and possessions, and for the maintenance of general tranquillity.

II. With regard to the other Allies of his Britannic Majesty, his Majesty demands, that there be reserved to her Majesty the Empress of all the Russias, a full and unlimited power, of taking part in this negociation, whenever she may think fit, or of acceding to the definitive treaty, and thereby returning to a state of peace with France.

III, His Majesty also demands, that her most faithful Majesty may be comprehended in this negociation, and may return to a state of peace with France, without any cession or burthenfome condition on either side.

IV. On these conditions his Majesty offers to France the entire and unreserved restitution of all the conquests which he has made on that power in the East and West Indies, proposing at the same time that a mutual understanding should be established as to the means of securing for the future the tranquillity of the two nations, and of consolidating, as much as possible, the advantages of their respective possessions. His Majesty offers in like manner, the restitution of the Islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon, and of the fishery of Newfoundland, on the footing of the *Status ante Bellum*.

But if in addition to this, his Majesty were to wave the right given to him by the express stipulations of the treaty of Utrecht, of opposing the cession of the Spanish part of St. Domingo to France, his Majesty would then demand, in return for this concession, a compensation, which might secure, at least in some degree, the maintenance of the balance of the respective possessions in that part of the world.

V. In all the cases of cessions or restitutions, which may come in question in the course of this negociation, there should be granted on each side, to all individuals, the most unlimited right to withdraw with their families and their property, and to sell their land and other immoveable possessions; and adequate arrangements also to be made, in the course of this negociation, for the removal of all sequestrations, and for the satisfaction of the just claims, which individuals on either side may have to make upon the respective governments.

(Signed)

MALMESBURY.

(No. 29.)

CONFIDENTIAL MEMORIAL ON THE PEACE WITH SPAIN
AND HOLLAND.

The Allies of France not having hitherto expressed any desire or disposition to treat with the King, his Majesty might have forbore to enter into any detail on their account; but, in order to avoid any delays prejudicial to the great object which the King has in view, and to accelerate the work of a general peace, his Majesty will not refuse to explain himself in the first instance on the points which concern those powers. If then the Catholic King should desire to be comprehended in this negociation, or to be allowed to accede to the definitive treaty, this would meet with no obstacle on the part of his Majesty. Nothing having hitherto been conquered by either of the two Sovereigns from the other, no other point could, at the present moment, come into question but that of the re-establishment of peace, simply, and without any restitution or compensation whatever, except such as might possibly result from the application of the principle declared at the end of the fourth article of the memorial already delivered to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

But if, during the negociation, any alteration should take place in the state of things, in this respect, it will then be proper to agree upon the restitutions and compensations to be made on each side.

With regard to the Republic of the United Provinces, his Britannic Majesty and his Allies find themselves too nearly interested in the political situation of those Provinces, and to be able to consent in their favour to the re-establishment of the *Status ante Bellum* as with respect to territorial possessions, unless France could

could, on her part, reinstate them in all respects in the same political situation in which they stood before the war.

If at least it were possible to re-establish in those provinces, agreeably to what is believed to be the wish of a great majority of the inhabitants, their ancient constitution and form of the government, his Majesty might then be disposed to relax, in their favour from a very considerable part of the conditions on which the present state of things obliges him to insist.

But if, on the contrary, it is with the Republic of Holland, in its present state, that their Britannic and Imperial Majesties will have to treat, they will feel themselves obliged to seek in territorial acquisitions, those compensations, and that security, which such a state of things will have rendered indispensable to them.

Restitutions of any kind, in favour of Holland, could in that case be admitted in so far only as they shall be compensated by arrangements calculated to contribute to the security of the Austrian Netherlands. The means of accomplishing this object will be found in the cessions which France has exacted in her treaty of peace with Holland, and the possessions of which by that power would in any case be absolutely incompatible with the security of the Austrian Netherlands in the hands of his Imperial Majesty.

It is on these principles that his Britannic Majesty would be ready to treat for the re-establishment of Peace with the Republic of Holland in its present state. The details of such a discussion must necessarily lead to the consideration of what would be due to the interests and the rights of the House of Orange.

(No. 30.)

Paris, Dec. 20, 1796.

MY LORD,

Mr. ELLIS returned here from London on Thursday last, the 15th instant, at five P. M. and delivered to me the dispatches No. 11 and 12, with which he was charged by your Lordship.

Although nothing can be clearer, more ably drawn up, or more satisfactory, than the instructions they contain, yet as it was of the last importance that I should be completely master of the subject before I saw the French Minister, I delayed asking for a conference till late on Friday evening, with a view that it should not take place till Saturday morning.

He appointed the hour of eleven A. M. on that day, and it was it was near one before we parted. Although what is said by M. Delacroix before he has communicated with the Directory cannot be considered as officially binding, and probably may, in the event, be very different from what I shall hear when he speaks to me in their name, yet as it is impossible they should not nearly conjecture the nature of the overtures I should make, and of course be prepared in some degree for them, it is material that your Lordship
 12 should

should be accurately acquainted with the first impressions they appear to make on M. Delacroix.

I prefaced what I had to communicate with saying, that I now came authorised to enter with him into deliberation upon one of the most important subjects that perhaps ever was brought into discussion; that its magnitude forbade all *fineffe*, excluded all prevarication, suspended all prejudices, and that as I had it in command to speak and act with freedom and truth, I expect that he, on his part, would consider these as the only means which could or ought to be employed, if he wished to see a negotiation, in which the happiness of millions was involved, terminate successfully. That, for greater precision, and with a view to be clearly understood in what I was about to propose, I would give him a confidential Memorial, accompanied by an Official Note, both which, when he had perused them, would speak for themselves. The Memorial contained the conditions, on the accomplishment of which his Majesty considered the restoration of peace to depend. The Note was expressive of his Majesty's readiness to enter into any explanation required by the Directory on the subject, or to receive any *Contre-projet*, resting on the same basis, which the Directory might be disposed to give in. That, moreover, I did not hesitate declaring to him, in conformity to the principle which I had laid down, and from which I certainly never should depart, at any period of the negotiation, that I was prepared to answer any questions, explain and elucidate any points, on which it was possible to foresee that doubts or misconceptions could arise on the consideration of these papers. And having said thus much, I had only to remark, that I believed, in no similar negotiation which had ever taken place, any Minister was authorised, in the first instance, to go so fully into the discussion as I now was. That I was sure neither the truth of this remark, nor the manifest conclusion to be drawn from it, would escape M. Delacroix's observation.

I then put the two papers, into his hands. He began by reading the Note, on which of course he could only express satisfaction. After perusing the confidential Memorial with all the attention it deserved, he, after a short pause, said, that it appeared to him to be liable to insurmountable objections; that it seemed to him to require much more than it conceded, and, in the event, not to leave France in a situation of proportional greatness to the powers of Europe. He said, the act of their Constitution, according to the manner in which it was interpreted by the best Publicists (and this phrase is worthy remark), made it impossible for the Republic to do what we required. The Austrian Netherlands were annexed to it; they could not be disposed of without flinging the nation into all the confusion which must follow a convocation of the Primary Assemblies; and he said, he was rather surprised that Great Britain should bring this forward as the governing condition of the treaty, since he thought he had, in some of our late conversations, fully explained the nature of their Constitution to me. I replied, that

that every thing I had heard from him in this point was perfectly in my recollection, as it probably was in his, that though I had listened to him with that attention I always afforded to every thing he said, yet I never made him any sort of reply, and had neither admitted nor controverted his opinion: That although I believed I could easily disprove this opinion, from the spirit of the French Constitution itself, yet the discussion of that Constitution was perfectly foreign to the object of my mission, since, even allowing his two positions, viz. that the retrocession of the Austrian Netherlands was incompatible with their laws, and that we ought to have known that beforehand; yet, that there existed a *Droit public* in Europe, paramount to any *Droit public* they might think proper to establish within their own dominions; and that if their Constitution was publickly known, the treaties existing between his Majesty and the Emperor were at least equally publick, and in these it was clearly and distinctly enounced, that the two contracting parties reciprocally promise not to lay down their arms without the restitution of all the dominions, territories, &c. which may have belonged to either of them before the war. That the date of this stipulation was previous to their annexing the Austrian Netherlands to France; and the notoriety of this ought, at the very moment when they had passed that law, to have convinced them, that, if adhered to, it must prove an insurmountable obstacle to Peace. I applied his maxim to the West India Islands, and to the settlements in the East Indies; and asked him, whether it was expected that we were to waive our right of possession, and be required still to consider them as integral parts of the French Republic which *must* be restored, and on which no value was to be set in the balance of compensation? I also stated the possible case of France having lost part of what she deemed her integral dominions, instead of having added to them in the course of the war; and whether then, under the apprehension of still greater losses, the government, as it was now composed, should consider itself as not vested with powers sufficient to save their country from the impending danger, by making peace on the conditions of sacrificing a portion of their dominions to save the remainder? M. Delacroix said, this was stating a case of necessity, and such a mode of reasoning did not attach to the present circumstances. I readily admitted the first part of this proposition, but contended, that if the power existed in a case of necessity, it equally existed in all others, and particularly in the case before us, since he himself had repeatedly told me that peace was what this country and its government wished for, and even wanted.

M. Delacroix, in reply, shifted his ground, and by a string of arguments founded on premises calculated for this purpose, attempted to prove, that from the relative situation of the adjacent countries, the present government of France would be reprehensible in the extreme, and deserve impeachment, if they ever suffered the Netherlands to be separated from their dominions; that by the
partition

partition of Poland, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, had increased their power to a most formidable degree; that England by its conquests, and by the activity and judgment with which it governed its colonies, had doubled its strength. Your Indian empire alone, said M. Delacroix with vehemence, has enabled you to subsidize all the powers of Europe against us, and your monopoly of trade has put you in possession of a fund of inexhaustible wealth. His words were, "*Votre empire dans l'Inde vous a fourni les Moyens de salarier toutes les Puissances contre nous, et vous avez accaparé le Commerce de Maniere que toutes les Richesses du Monde se versent dans vos Coffres.*"

From the necessity that France should keep the Netherlands and the Left Bank of the Rhine for the purpose of preserving its relative situation in Europe, he passed to the advantages which he contended would result to the other powers by such an addition to the French dominions. Belgium (to use his word) by belonging to France, would remove what had been the source of all wars for two centuries past, and the Rhine, being the natural boundary of France, would ensure the tranquillity of Europe for two centuries to come. I did not feel it necessary to combat this preposterous doctrine; I contented myself with reminding him of what he had said to me in one of our last conferences, when he made a comparison of the weakness of France under its monarchs, and its strength and vigour under its republican form of government. "*Nos ne sommes plus dans la Décadence de la France Monarchique, mais dans toute la Force d'une République adolescente,*" was his expression: and I inferred from this, according to his own reasoning, that the force and power France had acquired by its change of Government, was much greater than it could derive from any acquisition of territory; and that it followed, if France, when under a regal form of government, was a very just and constant object of attention, not to say of jealousy, to the other powers of Europe, France (admitting his axiom) was a much more reasonable object of jealousy and attention under its present constitution than it ever had yet been, and that no addition to its dominions could be seen by its neighbours, but under impressions of alarm for their own future safety, and for the general tranquillity of Europe. M. Delacroix's answer to this was so remarkable, that I must beg leave to insert it in what I believe to be nearly his own words.—"Dans le *Temps Révolutionnaire* tout se que vous dites, my Lord étoit vrai—rien négaloit notre Puissance; mais ce tems n'existe plus. Nos ne pouvons plus lever la nation en masse pour voler au secours de la Patrie en danger. Nous ne pouvons plus engager nos Concitoyens d'ouvrir leurs Bourses pour les verser dans le Trésor National, et de le priver même du nécessaire pour le bien de la chose Publique." And he ended by saying, that the French Republic, when at peace, necessarily must become the most quiet and pacific power in Europe. I only observed, that in this case the passage of the Republic from youth

to decrepitude had been very sudden; but that still I never could admit, that it would be a matter of indifference to its neighbours, much less one necessary security to itself, to acquire such a very extensive addition to its frontiers as that he had hinted at.

This led Mons. Delacroix to talk of offering an equivalent to the Emperor for the Austrian Netherlands, and it was to be found, according to his plan, in the secularization of the three ecclesiastical electorates, and several bishopricks in Germany and in Italy.

He talked upon this subject as one very familiar to him, and on which his thoughts had been frequently employed.

He spoke of making new electors, and named, probably with a view to render this scheme more palatable, the Stadtholder and the Dukes of Brunswick and Wurtemberg, as persons proper to replace the three ecclesiastical electors which were to be reformed.

It would be making an ill use of you Lordship's time, to endeavour to repeat to you all he said on this subject; it went in substance (as he himself confessed) to the total subversion of the present constitution of the Germanic body; and as it militated directly against the principles which both his Majesty and the Emperor laid down so distinctly as the basis of the peace to be made for the empire. I contented myself with reminding him of this circumstance, particularly as it is impossible to discuss this point with any propriety, till his Imperial Majesty becomes a party to the negotiation. I took this opportunity of hinting, that if on all the other points France agreed to the proposals now made, it would not be impossible that some increase of territory might be ceded to her on the Germanic side of her frontiers, and that this, in addition to the Duchy of Savoy, Nice, and Avignon, would be a very great acquisition of strength and power. Mons. Delacroix here again reverted to the constitution, and said, that these countries were already constitutionally annexed to France. I replied, that it was impossible, in the negotiation which we were beginning for the other powers to take it up from any period but that which immediately preceded the war, and that any acquisition or diminution of territory which had taken place among the Belligerent powers since it first broke out, must necessarily become subject matter for negotiation, and be balanced against each other in the final arrangement of a general peace. "You then persist," said M. Delacroix, "in applying this principle to Belgium?" I answered, "Most certainly; and I should not deal fairly with you if I hesitated to declare, in the outset of our negotiation, that on this point you must entertain no expectation that his Majesty will relax, or ever consent to see the Netherlands remain a part of France."

M. Delacroix replied, he saw no prospect in this case of our ideas ever meeting, and he despaired of the success of our negotiation. He returned again, however, to his idea of a possible equivalent to be found for the Emperor; but as all he proposed was the alienation or dismemberment of countries not belonging to

to France, even by conquests, I did not consider it as deserving attention, and it is certainly not worth repeating to your Lordship.

I need not observe, that all the equivalents proposed, however inadequate to the exchange, were offered as a return for our consent that the Netherlands should remain part of France; of course, the admitting them in any shape, would have been in direct contradiction to my instructions.

M. Delacroix touched very slightly on Italy, and the course of our conversation did not bring this part of the subject more into discussion.

I must add, that whenever I mentioned the restoration of the Netherlands to the Emperor, I always took care it should be understood that these were to be accompanied by such further cessions as should form a competent line of defence, and that France could not be permitted to keep possession of all the intermediate country to the Rhine; and I particularly dwelt on this point, when I held out the possibility of admitting an extension of the limits of France on the side of Germany. But as the French Minister no less strenuously opposed the restitution of the Netherlands to the Emperor, than I tenaciously insisted upon it, the further extension of my claim could not of course become a subject of argument.

I believe I have now, with a tolerable degree of accuracy, informed your Lordship of all that the French Minister said on my opening myself to him on that part of my instructions which more immediately relates to peace between Great Britain, his Imperial Majesty, and France. It remains with me to inform your Lordship what passed between us on the subject of our respective allies.

On the articles reserving a right to the court of Petersburg, and to that of Lisbon, to accede to the treaty of peace on the strict *Status ante Bellum*, the French Minister made no other remark than by mentioning the allies of the Republic, and by enquiring whether I was prepared to say any thing relative to their interests, which certainly the Republic could never abandon. This afforded me the opportunity of giving in the confidential Memorial B. relative to Spain and Holland, and I prefaced it by repeating to him the substance of the first part of your Lordship's No. 12.

Although I had touched upon the subject of the Spanish part of St. Domingo, when I had been speaking to M. Delacroix on the peace with France, yet, as it did not become a matter of discussion between us till I came to mention the peace with Spain, I thought it better to place all that passed on the subject in this part of my dispatch; it was the only point on which he entered; but I by no means infer from his not bringing forward some claims for Spain, that we are not to hear of any in the course of the negociation; on the contrary, I have little doubt that
many

many, and most of them inadmissible, will be made before it can end. He, however, was silent on them at this moment, and confined all he had to say to combating the idea that Spain was bound by the Treaty of Utrecht not to alienate her possessions in America. I had the article copied in my pocket, and I read it to him. He confessed it was clear and explicit, but that circumstances had so materially altered since the year 1713, that engagements made then ought not to be considered as in force now. I said, that the spirit of the article itself went to provide for distant contingences, not for what was expected to happen at or near the time when the Treaty was made; and that it was because the alteration of circumstances he alluded to was foreseen as possible, that the clause was inserted; and that if Spain paid any regard to the faith of Treaties, she must consider herself as no less strictly bound by this clause now, than at the moment when it was drawn up. I went on by saying, that it did not, however, appear quite impossible that this point might be settled without much difficulty; and that means might be devised that his Catholic Majesty should not break his faith, and both England and France be equally satisfied. I then held out to him, but in general terms, that either Spain might regain her part of St. Domingo, by making some considerable cession to Great Britain and France, as the price of peace, or that, in return for leaving the whole of St. Domingo to France, we should retain either Martinico or St. Lucea and Tobago. M. Delacroix listened with a degree of attention to these proposals, but he was fearful of committing himself by any expression of approbation; and he dismissed the subject of the court of Madrid, by observing, that France never would forsake the interests of its allies.

Our conversation on those of its other ally, Holland, was much longer, as the wording of the Memorial inevitably led at once deep into the subject.

M. Delacroix affected to treat any deviation from the Treaty of Peace concluded between France and that country, or any restoration of territories acquired under that Treaty to France, as quite impracticable. He treated as equally impracticable any attempt at restoring the ancient form of government in the Seven United Provinces. He talked with an air of triumph of the establishment of a National Convention at the Hague, and with an affectation of feeling, that by it the cause of freedom had extended itself over such a large number of people. He, however, was ready to confess, that from the great losses the Dutch Republic had sustained in its colonies, and particularly from the weak manner in which they had defended them, it could not be expected that his Majesty would consent to a full and complete restitution of them, and that it was reasonable that some should be sacrificed; and he asked me if I could inform him how far our views extended on this point? I said I had reason to believe, that what his Majesty would require would be possessions

and settlements which would not add either to the power or wealth of our Indian dominions; but only tend to secure to us their safe and unmolested possession. You mean by this, said M. Delacroix, the Cape and Trincomale? I said, they certainly came under that description; and I saw little prospect of their being restored to the Dutch. M. Delacroix launched forth on this into a most laboured dissertation on the value of the Cape of Good Hope, which he did not consider at all as a *port de relache*, but as a possession which, in our hands, would become one of the most fertile and most productive colonies in the East; and, according to his estimation of it, he did not scruple to assert, that it would ultimately be an acquisition of infinitely greater importance to England than that of the Netherlands to France; and, if acquiesced in, should be reckoned as a full and ample compensation for them. He added, "If you are masters of the Cape and Trincomale, we shall hold out settlements in India, and the islands of France and Bourbon, entirely at the tenure of your will and pleasure; they will be ours only as long as you choose we should retain them. You will be sole masters in India, and we shall be entirely dependent upon you." I repeated to him, that it was as means of defence, not of offence, that these possessions would be insisted on; and that, if the matter was fairly and dispassionately discussed, he would find that they afforded us a great additional security, but no additional power of attack, even if we were disposed to disturb the peace of that part of the world. If these, and perhaps some few other not very material settlements belonging to the Dutch, were to be insisted upon, and if he would be pleased to enumerate all we should still have to restore to them, while they had nothing to restore to England, it was impossible not to consider the terms on which his Majesty proposed peace to Holland as generous and liberal.

M. Delacroix was not at all disposed to agree with me on this point; and said, Holland stripped of these possessions, would be ruined. He then held out, but as if the idea had just crossed his mind, the possibility of indemnifying the Dutch for their losses in India, by giving them a tract of territory towards the Meuse (I could not find out whether he meant Aix-la-Chapelle, Liege, or the countries of Juliers and Berge), and hinted that if this was not to be done, an additional sugar island might, perhaps, be ceded to the Dutch Republic. I told him all this might become a subject of future discussion; and I conceived, that if we could agree upon the more essential points, the Treaty would not break off on these secondary considerations. Our conversation had now been extremely long, and M. Delacroix ended by saying, that although he had taken upon himself to enter with me thus far upon the subject, yet I must not consider any thing he said as binding, or as pledging the Republic, till such time as he had laid the papers I had given him before the Directory; and, in order to do this with more accuracy, he again asked me, Whether in his report he was to state the disuniting Belgium from
France

France as a *sine qua non* from which his Majesty would not depart? I replied, it most certainly was a *sine qua non* from which his Majesty would not depart; and that any proposal, which would leave the Netherlands annexed to France, would be attended with much greater benefit to that power, and loss to the allies, than the present relative situation of the Belligerent powers could entitle the French government to expect.

M. Delacroix repeated his concern at the peremptory way in which I made this assertion, and asked, whether it would admit of no modification? I replied, if France could, in a *Contre-projet*, point out a practicable and adequate one, still keeping in view, that the Netherlands must not be French, or likely again to fall into the hands of France, such a proposal might certainly be taken into consideration;

M. Delacroix by no means encouraged me to explain myself more fully; he repeatedly said, that this difficulty relative to the Netherlands was one which could not be overcome.

Just as I was taking leave of him, he begged me to explain what was meant by the words in the memoir (A) in the fourth paragraph, beginning *de s'entendre mutuellement sur les Moyens d'assurer*, and ending at *leurs possessions respectives*. I told him it referred to the destructive system adopted by France in the West Indies, and went to express a wish that the two powers should agree on some general and uniform system of internal police in the settlements there, which would contribute to the security of these possessions to the respective countries, and at the same time to the happiness of every description of inhabitants in them.

M. Delacroix, a little hurt at my expression relative to the system adopted by France, endeavoured to recriminate on us; but he ended by saying, that they should certainly be willing to concur in any arrangement relative to the Negroes, which did not militate against the principles of their constitution. Here our conference ended, and as, during the whole course of it, I bore in my mind the possibility, that although this our first might be the only favourable opportunity I should ever have of speaking on the general principles on which his Majesty was disposed to treat, I endeavoured by adverting more or less to almost every point in my instructions, to enable M. Delacroix (if he reports faithfully) to state to the Directory what I said, in such a manner as to put it out of their power to misconceive what were his Majesty's intentions; to remove all possibility of cavil on this case, and to bring them to a clear and distinct answer, whether they would agree to open a negotiation on the principle of the *Status ante Bellum*, or on one differing from it only in form, not in substance. I hope, in attempting to do this, I did not, in the first instance, commit myself, or discover more of my Instructions, than it became me to do, and that, in the conversation with M. Delacroix, nothing escaped me which might, at some subsequent period, hurt the progress of the negotiation. I have, I believe, given this con-

ference nearly *verbatim* to your Lordship; and I was particularly anxious to do this correctly and minutely, as well that you may judge on the propriety of what I said myself, as that what M. Delacroix said to me, may be accurately known, and remain on record.

It must, however, be remembered (as I observed in the beginning of this dispatch), that he spoke from himself, as Minister indeed, but not under the immediate instructions of the Directory; and this consideration will take a little away from the singularity of some of the positions he advanced.

I confess my Lord, from the civility of his manners, and from his apparent readiness to discuss the subject, the impression which remained on my mind on leaving him was, that the negotiation would go on, but be liable to so many difficulties, and some of them so nearly insurmountable, that knowing as I do the opinion of the Directory, I saw little prospect of its terminating successfully. But I did not expect the conduct of the Directory would immediately be such as to evince a manifest inclination, and even determination, to break off on the first proposals; and I was not a little surprised at receiving on Sunday, at three P. M. the inclosed letter (A) from M. Delacroix: he sent it by the Principal Secretary of his department (M. Guiraudet) who communicated to me the original of the Arrêté of the Directory, of which this letter, abating the alteration in the form, is a literal copy. After perusing it, I asked M. Guiraudet, whether he was informed of its contents, and this led to a short conversation on them. I told him that both the demands were so unexpected, that I could not reply to them off hand: that as to the first, it was quite unusual to sign Memorials which were annexed to a Note actually signed, and that I scarcely felt myself authorised to depart from what was, I believe, an invariable rule. That as to the second demand, made in so peremptory and unprecedented a way, I could, without much hesitation, say at once, that it could not be complied with. Mons. Guiraudet lamented this much, and said, that being the case, he feared our principles of negotiation would never coincide. I agreed with him in my expressions of concern. We conversed together afterwards for some time, but nothing passed at all worthy remark. I told him I should send my answer the next day. On reflecting more attentively on the request that I would sign the two memorials which I had given in, it struck me that the complying with it pledged me to nothing, that it was merely gratifying them on a point insisted on peevishly, and that the doing it would put them still more in the wrong.

As to the strange demand of an *ultimatum*, it was perfectly clear what it became me to say, and I hope, that in the inclosed answer B. (which I sent yesterday morning at twelve o'clock) to M. Delacroix, I shall be found to have adhered as closely as possible to the spirit of my instructions.

Yesterday evening at half past nine, M. Guiraudet brought me the Note C, to which I immediately replied by the Note D. They require

require no comment; and as I intend leaving Paris to-morrow, and travelling with all convenient speed, I shall so soon have it in my power to say the little which remains to say, relative to this sudden, though perhaps not unlooked-for close to my mission, that I need not trespass any further on your Lordship's patience.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed)

MALMESBURY.

P. S. I thought it would be proper for his Majesty's Minister at Vienna to receive the earliest intelligence of the negotiation being broken off; I therefore have dispatched a messenger to Vienna, with a Copy of the several papers which have passed between me and Mons. Delacroix since our conference, and also a succinct account of what passed on it. The messenger left this place to-day at three o'clock P. M.

M.

Right Hon. Lord Grenville, &c. &c.

(No. 31.)

Paris, 28th Frimaire (Dec. 18), 5th year.

SIR,

The Executive Directory has heard the reading of the Official Note, signed by you, and of two confidential Memorials, without signatures, which were annexed to it, and which you gave in to me yesterday. I am charged expressly by the Directory to declare to you, that it cannot listen to any confidential Note without a signature, and to require of you to give in to me, officially, within four and twenty hours, your *Ultimatum*, signed by you.

Accept, Sir, the assurance of my high consideration.

(Signed)

CH. DELACROIX.

(No. 32.) [A.]

Paris, 19th December, 1796.

Copy. (B.)

LORD MALMESBURY, in answer to the letter which the Minister for Foreign Affairs had the goodness to transmit to him through the hands of the Secretary General of his department must remark, that in signing the Official Note; which he gave in to that Minister, by order of his Court, he thought he had complied with all the usual formalities, and had given the necessary authenticity to the two confidential Memorials which were annexed to it. Nevertheless, to remove all difficulties, as far as lies in his power, he willingly adopts the forms which are pointed out by the Resolution of the Executive Directory, and hastens to send to the Minister for Foreign Affairs the two Memorials signed by his hand.

With respect to the positive demand of an *Ultimatum*, Lord Malmesbury observes that insisting on that point in so peremptory a man-

a manner, before the two powers shall have communicated to each other their respective pretensions, and that the Articles of the future treaty shall have been submitted to the discussions which the different interests which are to be adjusted, necessarily demand, is to shut the door against all negotiation. He, therefore, can add nothing to the assurances which he has already given to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, as well by word of mouth, as in his Official Note; and he repeats that he is ready to enter with that Minister into every explanation of which the state and progress of the negotiation may admit, and that he will not fail to enter into the discussion of the proposals of his Court, *or of any counter project which may be delivered to him, on the part of the Executive Directory*, with that candour and that spirit of conciliation which correspond with the just and pacific sentiments of his Court.

Lord Malmesbury requests the Minister for Foreign Affairs to accept the assurances of his high consideration.

(No. 33.) [C.]

The Undersigned Minister for Foreign Affairs is charged by the Executive Directory, to answer to Lord Malmesbury's two Notes of the 27th and 29th Frimaire (17th and 19th December, O. S.) that the Executive Directory will listen to no proposals, contrary to the constitution, to the laws, and to the treaties, which bind the Republic.

And as Lord Malmesbury announces at every communication, that he is in want of the opinion of his Court, from which it results that he acts a part merely passive in the negotiation, which renders his presence at Paris useless; the Undersigned is further charged to give him notice to depart from Paris in eight and forty hours, with all the persons who have accompanied and followed him, and to quit as expeditiously as possible the territory of the Republic. The Undersigned declares, moreover, in the name of the Executive Directory, that if the British Cabinet is desirous of peace, the Executive Directory is ready to allow the negotiations, according to the basis laid down in the present Note, by the reciprocal channel of Couriers.

(Signed)

CH. DELACROIX.

*Paris, 29th Frimaire (19th December,)
5th Year of the French Republic,
One and Indivisible.*

(No. 34.) [D]

LORD MALMESBURY hastens to acknowledge the receipt of the Note of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, dated yesterday. He is preparing to quit Paris to-morrow, and demands, in consequence, the necessary Passports for himself and his suite.

He requests the Minister for Foreign Affairs to accept the assurances of his high consideration.

Paris, 20th Dec. 1796.

DECLA-

D E C L A R A T I O N .

THE negociation which an anxious desire for the restoration of Peace had induced his Majesty to open at Paris, having been abruptly terminated by the French government, the King thinks it due to himself and to his people, to state in this publick manner the circumstances which have preceded and attended a transaction of so much importance to the general interests of Europe.

It is well known that early in the present year his Majesty, laying aside the consideration of many circumstances of difficulty and discouragement determined to take such steps as were best calculated to open the way for negociation, if any corresponding desire prevailed on the part of his enemies. He directed an overture to be made in his name by his Minister in Swisserland, for the purpose of ascertaining the dispositions of the French government with respect to Peace. The answer which he received in return was at once haughty and evasive: It affected to question the sincerity of those dispositions of which his Majesty's conduct afforded so unequivocal a proof; it raised groundless objections to the mode of negociation proposed by his Majesty (that of a general congress, by which Peace has so often been restored to Europe); but it studiously passed over in silence his Majesty's desire to learn what other mode would be preferred by France. It at the same time asserted a principle which was stated as an indispensable preliminary to all negociation; a principle under which the terms of Peace must have been regulated, not by the usual considerations of justice, policy, and reciprocal convenience; but by an implicit submission on the part of all other powers to a claim founded on the internal laws and seperate constitution of France, as having full authority to supersede the treaties entered into by independent states, to govern their interests, to controul their engagements, and to dispose of their dominions.

A Pretension in itself so extravagant could in no instance have been admitted, or even listened to for a moment. Its application to the present case led to nothing less than that France should, as a preliminary to all discussion, retain nearly all her conquests, and those particularly in which his Majesty was most concerned, both from the ties of interest, and the sacred obligations of treaties: That she should in like manner recover back all that had been conquered from her in every part of the world: And that she should be left at liberty to bring forward such further demands on all other points of negociation, as such unqualified submission on the part of those with whom she treated could not fail to produce.

On such grounds as these it was sufficiently evident that no negociation could be established: Neither did the answer of his Majesty's

jeſty's enemies afford any opening for continuing the diſcuſſion, ſince the mode of negociation offered by his Maſteſty had been peremptorily rejected by them, and no other had been ſtated in which they were willing to concur.

His Maſteſty was however not diſcouraged even by this reſult from ſtill purſuing ſuch meaſures as appeared to him moſt conducive to the end of Peace; and the wiſhes of his ally the Emperor correſponding with thoſe which his Maſteſty had manifeſted, ſentiments of a ſimilar tendency were expreſſed on the part of his Imperial Maſteſty at the time of opening the campaign: But the continuance of the ſame ſpirit and principles on the part of the enemy rendered this freſh overture equally unſucceſſful.

While the government of France thus perſiſted in obſtructing every meaſure that could even open the way to negociation, no endeavour was omitted to miſlead the publick opinion throughout all Europe with reſpect to the real cauſe of the prolongation of the war, and to caſt a doubt on thoſe diſpoſitions which could alone have dictated the ſteps taken by his Maſteſty and his auguſt ally.

In order to deprive his enemies of all poſſibility of ſubterfuge or evaſion, and in the hope that a juſt ſenſe of the continued calamities of war, and of the increaſing diſtreſs of France herſelf, might at length have led to more juſt and pacific diſpoſitions, his Maſteſty renewed in another form, and through the intervention of a friendly power, a propoſal for opening negociations for Peace. The manner in which this intervention was received, indicated the moſt hoſtile diſpoſitions towards Great Britain, and at the ſame time afforded to all Europe a ſtriking inſtance of that injurious and offensive conduct which is obſerved on the part of the French government towards all other countries. The repeated overtures made in his Maſteſty's name were nevertheless of ſuch a nature, that it was at laſt found impoſſible to perſiſt in the abſolute rejection of them, without the direct and undisguised avowal of a determination to reſuſe to Europe all hope of the reſtoration of tranquillity. A channel was therefore at length indicated through which the government of France profeſſed itſelf willing to carry on a negociation, and a readineſs was expreſſed (though in terms far remote from any ſpirit of conciliation) to receive a Miniſter, authoriſed by his Maſteſty to proceed to Paris for that purpoſe.

Many circumſtances might have been urged as affording powerful motives againſt adopting this ſuggeſtion, until the government of France had given ſome inclination of a ſpirit better calculated to promote the ſucceſs of ſuch a miſſion, and to meet theſe advances on the part of Great Britain. The King's deſire for the reſtoration of general peace on juſt and honourable terms, his concern for the intereſts of his ſubjects, and his determination to leave to his enemies no pretext for imputing to him the conſequences of their own ambition, induced him to overlook

every

every such consideration, and to take a step which these reasons alone could justify.

The repeated endeavours of the French government to defeat this mission in its outset, and to break off the intercourse thus opened, even before the first steps towards negotiation could be taken; the indecent and injurious language employed with a view to irritate, the captious and frivolous objections raised for the purpose of obstructing the progress of the discussion; all these have sufficiently appeared from the official papers which passed on both sides, and which are known to all Europe.

But above all, the abrupt termination of the negotiation has afforded the most conclusive proof, that at no period of it was any real wish for Peace entertained on the part of the French government.

After repeated evasion and delay, that government had at length consented to establish, as the basis of the negotiation, a principle proposed by his Majesty, liberal in its own nature, equitable towards his enemies, and calculated to provide for the interests of his allies, and of Europe. It had been agreed that compensation should be made to France by proportionable restitutions from his Majesty's conquests on that power, for those arrangements to which she should be called upon to consent, in order to satisfy the just pretensions of his allies, and to preserve the political balance of Europe. At the desire of the French government itself, Memorials were presented by his Majesty's Minister, which contained the outlines of terms of Peace, grounded on the basis so established, and in which his Majesty proposed to carry to the utmost possible extent, the application of a principle so equitable as with respect to France, and so liberal on his Majesty's part. The delivery of these papers was accompanied by a Declaration expressly and repeatedly made, both verbally and in writing, that his Majesty's Minister was willing and prepared to enter, with a spirit of conciliation and fairness, into the discussion of the different points there contained, or into that of any other proposal or scheme of peace which the French government might wish to substitute in its place.

In reply to this communication, he received a demand in form the most offensive, and in substance the most extravagant, that ever was made in the course of any negotiation. It was peremptorily required of him that in the very outset of the business, when no answer had been given by the French government to his first proposal, when he had not even learnt, in any regular shape, the nature or extent of the objections to it, and much less received from that government any other offer or plan of Peace, he should in twenty-four hours deliver in a statement of the final terms to which his Court would in any case accede. A demand tending evidently to shut the door to all negotiation, to preclude all discussion, all explanation, all possibility of the amicable adjustment of points of difference. A demand in its nature preposterous, in its execution impracticable, since it is plain that no such ultimate

resolution respecting a general plan of Peace ever can be rationally formed, much less declared, without knowing what points are principally objected to by the enemy, and what facilities he may be willing to offer in return for concession in those respects. Having declined compliance with this demand, and explained the reasons which rendered it inadmissible, but having at the same time, expressly renewed the declaration of his readiness to enter into the discussion of the proposal he had conveyed, or any other which might be communicated to him, the King's Minister received no other answer than an abrupt command to quit Paris in forty-eight hours. If, in addition to such an insult, any further proof were necessary of the dispositions of those by whom it was offered, such proof would be abundantly supplied from the contents of the note in which this order was conveyed. The mode of negotiation on which the French government had itself insisted, is there rejected, and no practicable means left open for treating with effect. The basis of negotiation so recently established by mutual consent, is there disclaimed, and, in its room a principle clearly inadmissible is re-asserted as the only ground on which France can consent to treat: The very same principle which had been brought forward in reply to his Majesty's first overtures from Switzerland, which had then been rejected by his Majesty, but which now appears never to have been in fact abandoned by the Government of France, however inconsistent with that on which they had expressly agreed to treat.

It is therefore necessary that all Europe should understand, that the rupture of the negotiation at Paris does not arise from the failure of any sincere attempt on the part of France to reconcile by fair discussion the views and interests of the contending powers: Such a discussion has been repeatedly invited, and even solicited on the part of his Majesty, but has been, in the first instance, and absolutely, precluded by the act of the French government.

It arises exclusively from the determination of that government to reject all means of Peace: A determination which appeared but too strongly in all the preliminary discussions; which was clearly manifested in the demand of an Ultimatum made in the very outset of the negotiation; but which is proved beyond all possibility of doubt by the obstinate adherence to a claim which never can be admitted—a claim that the construction which that government affects to put (though even in that respect unsupported by the fact) on the internal constitution of its own country, shall be received by all other nations as paramount to every known principle of public law in Europe, as superior to the obligations of Treaties, to the ties of common interest, to the most pressing and urgent considerations of general security.

On such grounds it is that the French government has abruptly terminated a negotiation, which it commenced with reluctance, and conducted with every indication of a resolution to prevent its final success. On these motives it is that the further effusion of blood,

blood, the continual calamities of war, the interruptions of peaceable and friendly intercourse among mankind, the prolonged distresses of Europe, and the accumulated miseries of France itself, are by the government of that country to be justified to the world.

His Majesty, who had entered into the negociation with good faith, who has suffered no impediment to prevent his prosecuting it with earnestness and sincerity, has now only to lament its abrupt termination; and to renew in the face of all Europe the solemn declaration, that, whenever his enemies shall be disposed to enter on the work of general pacification in a spirit of conciliation and equity, nothing shall be wanting on his part to contribute to the accomplishment of that great object, with a view to which he has already offered such considerable sacrifices on his part, and which is now retarded only by the exorbitant pretensions of his enemies.

Westminster,
27th December 1796.

This following paper is generally considered as

THE COUNTER DECLARATION OF THE FRENCH.

NOTE ON THE DIMISSAL OF LORD MALMESBURY.

[From the *Redacteur* of Dec. 24th]

THE numerous and brilliant successes of the arms of the Republic have not shut the ears of the French to the voice of humanity. If they took up arms it was in their own defence; if they pursued their enemies beyond their own territory, it was for the purpose of forcing them to conclude a Peace. Peace has been the constant object of their efforts and of their wishes, and it was already re-established with most of the powers of the coalition on a happy and solid foundation when the English Envoy was fastidiously announced. There were a thousand grounds for distrusting the sincerity of this step in the English Government. The perfidy of the means which it had employed against us; the troubles in the interior of France which it had excited; the false assignats with which it had inundated the country; La Vendee inflamed and supported in a state of insurrection; the traitors which it had hired; in fine, the generally recognized character of its Envoy, for duplicity and intrigue, were all presumptions of its bad faith.

But,

But eager to grasp at the hope of restoring peace to Europe, the Directory cheerfully dismissed every suspicion; it rejoiced to think that the almost incredible successes of the army of Italy, that the trophies of glory gained by the army of the Rhine and Moselle in its memorable retreat, had at last opened the eyes of the British Cabinet; it was forward in consenting to dispatch the passports demanded for the English Envoy. Its decree for this purpose was dated on the 9th of last Vendemaire, (Oct. 25.) Lord Malmesbury certainly did not feel the same eagerness; he did not arrive in Paris till the 2d. Brumaire, following, (Oct. 25.) His first overture seemed to indicate an intention of rendering the negotiation almost interminable. His powers were indefinite; he might have adopted whatever form of negotiation he thought proper; he might have begun it, therefore, with that frankness and that good faith which in the course of last year have enabled us to conclude so many treaties; he might have withheld every pretension which was insulting to the Republic or inadmissible by its constitution, its laws, and its treaties. He might have proposed and discussed, without loss of time sincere propositions, which would have been combated with the same frankness. His conduct was quite the reverse. He had no power from the Allies of England; he found no person at Paris charged to stipulate for their interests, which placed him in a situation to act only in virtue of that part of his powers which authorised him to treat in the name of England. He affected a wish to comprehend all the powers in the treaty, and declared in consequence that he thought it his duty to send couriers even to Russia. To have the air at the same time of wishing to advance the negotiation, Lord Malmesbury proposed the admission of a vague principle of proportional compensation as the basis of discussion. These procrastinations did not put a stop to the effusion of human blood; the Directory lamented the delay, it testified its concern in the reply; nevertheless, as it was sincerely desirous of Peace, it accepted every means that was proposed to expedite its arrival. As to the principle of compensation, it did not contest it. This principle was of the essence of the negotiation into which they were to enter; the difficulties arose only from the application of the principle; it called therefore for this application; it asked of Lord Malmesbury what were the objects of reciprocal compensation that he meant to propose. This step was too rapid for his Lordship's taste; he pretended to believe that the Directory disputed his principle; his subsequent notes were more vague and complicated than his former; he affected to ask by a note, whether the Memorials transmitted to him, contained an answer to those which he had previously furnished, in fine by way of keeping up a climax in this temporising system, Lord Malmesbury though he was vested with full powers replied to every word that was said to him, that he would refer it to his Court, and each time he dispatched a courier. The indecency of this game could not last long. The note of the 7th Frimaire, (Nov. 27th,) in which the Minister for Foreign Affairs was charged

charged to repeat the demand to Lord Malmesbury, made upon his own principle, to specify without delay, and nominatively, the objects of reciprocal compensation which he meant to propose: this note made him feel that it was at last necessary that he should explain himself, and he promised to do it. Nevertheless, and still in spite of his full powers, he dispatched not only a courier, but one of the secretaries of his legation. Twenty days more elapsed, and as if Lord Malmesbury was afraid that any one step of his proceedings should have the appearance of sincerity, the two Memorials which he produced on the 27th and 29th Frimaire, were without signatures. On the report which was made to the Directory upon these Memorials; on the exposure of the overtures of Lord Malmesbury, which left no possibility of discussion, since they proposed that the Government should sign the disgrace of the Republick, the Directory gave his Lordship notice to present his *ultimatum* in twenty four hours and to sign it. His Lordship signed his two Memorials. A slight perusal of their contents must fill all France with that indignation with which the Directory must have read them and demonstrate the necessity there was for dismissing the man who dared to propose them. In these England at once dictates the restitution to his Majesty the Emperor and King, of all his estates upon the footing of possession previous to the war. Thus, the victorious French, the French who have shed their blood, and squandered their resources to repel an unjust aggression were to retire shamefully within their territories as if they had been vanquished. They were to support the weight and the expence of a war which they were obliged to maintain in defence of their liberty! Thus in compliance with these demands too, although by the text of the constitution a treaty cannot stipulate any alienation of the territory of the Republick, the Directory was to restore the *ci-devant* Belgium. They were to sign with their own hand the instrument of their impeachment, by the violation of the social agreement which they were specially deputed to maintain! Thus those nations who are connected with us, who have relied upon our friendship, upon our fidelity, were to be basely abandoned! England next imperiously dissolves the treaties we have made with the greater number of the Princes of Germany. In her eyes these treaties are of no value. It was only with his Imperial Majesty that France could have concluded them; it is upon his Imperial Majesty that the English Government is desirous of rendering that Peace dependant which the Republick has granted to the States of Germany who have detached themselves from the coalition. The evacuation of Italy is next proposed by England; it would be necessary, therefore to abandon also *ci-devant* Savoy, and the county of Nice; it would be necessary then to exercise towards their inhabitants the same perfidy as in the case of the Ancient Belgians: and in order that the consequences of this mode of conduct should call down upon France the hatred of those who have seconded her arms with their good wishes or by their means, in order that this baseness might

might for ever devote the Republick to the execration of nations, England discharges her from the exercise of the power of interfering in the internal affairs of these counties, and by consequence of that of warding off the vengeance which they already meditate against those who have shewn themselves friendly to our cause, who by their exertions have seconded the courage of the brave army of Italy, in those, in fine, who have assisted in preventing the massacre of our brothers in arms. To these propositions, openly infamous, succeed clauses which a little more carefully conceal the ignominy with which the English Government desire to overwhelm us. It reserves to the Court of St. Peterburgh the full and unlimited power of joining in the negociation when it thinks proper. It would doubtless have interfered if we had had the baseness to listen to pretensions so odious. It would indeed have interfered, and strong through the weakness which it might reasonably have imputed to us, it would have required us to submit to new humiliations. Portugal next figures in the project of this Lord—It reserves to Portugal too the power of joining in the negociation; and faithful to its secret principle of throwing upon the Republick the whole expence of a war which she has been compelled to support against all Europe confederated, to lay waste and dismember her territory, Lord Malmesbury, nevertheless not daring to demand openly that the French Government should renounce the stipulation of a sum of money to be paid by Portugal to reimburse the Republic for the expence of the war, prepares in his Memorial the foundation of that unjust pretension, and craftily proposes that in the treaty with Portugal, there shall be no question of any burdensome condition either upon the one side or the other. Not content with the important aggrandizement which the partition of Poland had conferred upon her allies; not content with having enriched herself with the spoils of our commerce, by a treaty perfidiously purchased: not content with having thus broken the balance of Europe, the restoration of which she so loudly demands, England, under pretext of re-establishing this very balance, has contended with the Republick against the validity of the cession which has been made by his Catholick Majesty of the Spanish part of Saint Domingo. She demands a compensation for this object. Without a blush she founds her ridiculous pretension upon the 20th. article of the Treaty of Utrecht, which she herself, in fact, annulled by the cession which he caused to be made in her favour in 1763, of Florida, St. Augustin and Pensacola. In fine in a latter article studiously obscure and methodically complicated, Lord Malmesbury presents certain bases relative to the rights of individuals; bases, the object of which does not appear susceptible of any application, unless they refer to the Emigrants and to the restitution of their property, sold or sequestered. *And these for sooth, are propositions for Peace!*

The

The second Memorial of Lord Malmesbury concerns the Allies of France; and this Memorial is not less insulting than that we have mentioned. After having passed cursorily over the interests of Spain to which he supposes no indemnification to be due, he speaks of Holland, and on this head his pretensions are extravagant even to frenzy. According to him, the French Republick ought to barter the liberty of Holland—the Stadtholderate must be restored. France must sacrifice this Republick, with which the most perfect friendship subsists, to a new revolution—trampling under foot the most sacred conventions—shamefully violating the faith of treaties, she is called upon to let loose upon the head of this people all the horrors which would arise from the re-action of the Orange Party. And what was to be the price of this infamy? Would it not be imagined that England offers upon these conditions the restitution of what treachery has enabled her to plunder from Holland? Would it not be imagined that she was to add to this offer that of some indemnification to be afterwards arranged? No; she offers only the restitution of a part of what she does not blush to consider as conquest; and doubtless, by means of the indecisive reserve she preserves, she was afterwards to announce the pretension of retaining the Cape and the Island of Ceylon; still with a view of preserving the balance of Europe, which in her understanding consists in being herself every thing, and the other powers nothing. Lord Malmesbury proposes, in fine, that if the French do not consent to tear Holland in pieces with their own hands, they should give to the Emperor and King every thing which Holland has ceded to France in the treaty concluded between them.

Such, truly, are the conditions of Peace proposed by the noble Lord! Without doubt they must be considered as war-hoops by every man whose heart is not impenetrable to the love of his country; by every man who respects its laws, and the faith due to its treaties: it is shame and perfidy which England proposes to us; it is the violation of our constitution and of good faith: it is the subversion of our principles, the restoration of the Emigrants, the restitution of their fortunes, a counter-revolution, anarchy and civil war; it is every evil, every misfortune, and every crime united, with which they present us in pretending to ask for Peace! Presidious England, or rather, crafty and nefarious English Government! You only wished for money, and this was the only object of your embassy! You wished to deceive the people whose happiness is entrusted to you! You wished to obtain from them resources, without which your unmeaning rage would become impotent. But do not count upon the successes with which you flatter yourself; you are about to lavish your new treasures to no purpose; you are going only to assure and to hasten your ruin; your vain boast of publick credit will come to nought as soon as the blindness of the nation is removed; French courage will lessen your arrogance, the heroes who beat you in the fields of Houndscote,

scoote, Gemappe, Fleurus, Werwick, Comines; &c. upon the frozen plains of Holland, upon the banks of the Adige, in the defiles of the Brenta of Trou-d'Enfers, &c. these heroes still exist; they will force you to restore to the world that peace which humanity reclaims, and which your avarice and devouring ambition withhold.

Friends of Peace! take courage, blood will not continue long to flow—England cannot steel the hearts of all the powers against the cry that humanity has raised. Austria! Austria itself will soon open its eyes; alarmed at a war to which it sees no end; exhausted by the immense expence of a lengthened struggle; deprived of the resources of those states now in our possession; undeceived respecting the English Government, who calling itself her ally has preserved what was its own, and has left her despoiled of Belgium, of a part of Germany, and of Italy; pressed by her own subjects, upon whom the devastations consequent upon the war chiefly fall; Austria, in fine, under the influence of better councils, menaced perhaps from another quarter, will feel the necessity of treating with the Republick, and then England, standing by itself, and justly exposed to all the resentment of the French, will not be able to dissemble its weakness, and will receive with more gentleness a Peace, which it now dares to disdain.

P. N. I. S.



